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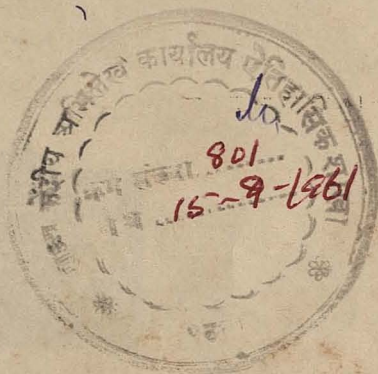
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**BIHAR AND ORISSA DISTRICT GAZETTEERS.**

**CHAMPARAN.**



[Price—Rs. 2-4-0.]



BIHAR AND ORISSA DISTRICT GAZETTEERS

# CHAMPARAN

BY

L. S. O'MALLEY, I.C.S.,

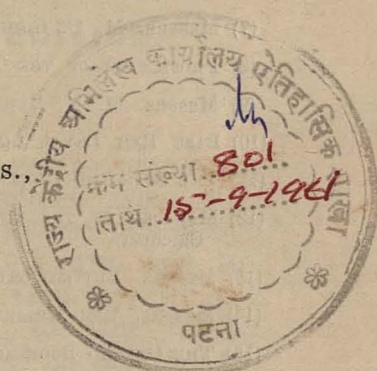
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REVISED

BY

R. E. SWANZY, I.C.S.,

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## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

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I DESIRE to acknowledge the great assistance I have derived in compiling this volume from the Champaran Survey and Settlement Report (1900) by Mr. C. J. Stevenson-Moore, I.C.S. I also beg to express my thanks to Mr. W. R. Gourlay, I.C.S., formerly Collector of Champaran, for the ready assistance he has given in supplying materials and revising the proofs.

L. S. S. O'M.



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## **PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.**

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IN revising the first edition of the Champaran District Gazetteer I have referred freely to Mr. Sweeney's Settlement report, which has been invaluable.

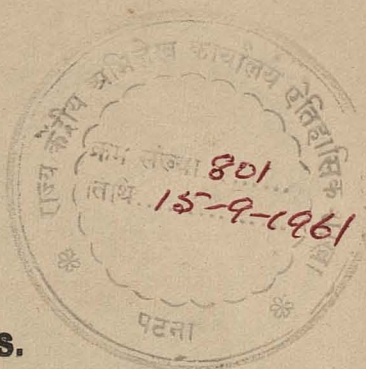
The second edition follows the lines of the first with the exception of the subject of the relations between landlords and tenants which has been combined with the chapter on indigo.

I have included this chapter as though indigo is no longer grown and manufactured in the district, the industry has in the past played such an important part in all agrarian problems.

Publication of this edition has been delayed by the Earthquake. The main chapters were written before the earthquake and remain unaltered. A subsidiary chapter has been added after the Gazetteer, in which I have endeavoured to indicate the more important permanent changes caused. I have freely referred to the report of Mr. W. B. Brett, C.I.E., Relief Commissioner published in 1935 and am indebted to the Collector of Champaran, Rai Bahadur S. P. Mukherjee and to Mr. Bowstead, I.C.S., Manager of the Bettiah Estate for valuable notes on the subject.

R. E. S.





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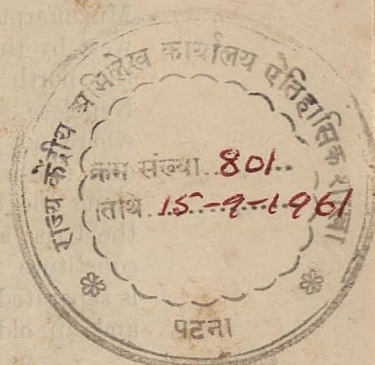
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## GAZETTEER

OF THE

# CHAMPARAN DISTRICT.

### CHAPTER I.

#### PHYSICAL ASPECTS.

THE district of Champaran, which forms the extreme north-western portion of the Tirhut Division and of the province of Bihar and Orissa, is situated between  $26^{\circ} 16'$  and  $27^{\circ} 31'$  north latitude, and between  $83^{\circ} 50'$  and  $85^{\circ} 18'$  east longitude. It extends over an area of 3,531 square miles, and contains a population of 2,145,687 according to the census of 1931. There are two subdivisions, Sadr and Bettiah. Sadr subdivision has an area of 1,518 square miles and a population of 1,238,789, and the headquarters station is Motihari. Bettiah, which is the headquarters of the subdivision of that name, is a more populous town than Motihari and also the chief trading centre in the district. The area of Bettiah subdivision is 2,013 square miles and its population is 906,898.

The name Champaran is a corruption of Champa-aranya, i.e. the forest of champa trees (*Michelia Champaca*), a designation which is popularly believed to date back to the time when the district was a vast forest uninhabited except by solitary ascetics.



## Boundaries.

The district is bounded on the north and north-east by Nepal; on the south-east and south by the district of Muzaffarpur; on the south-west by Saran; and on the north-west by the Gorakhpur district of the United Provinces. To the north and north-east the boundary marches with the Nepalese *zilas* of Parsa and Bara; and here the frontier, where not naturally formed by rivers, is marked by ditches and masonry pillars, and for a considerable distance runs along the crest of the Sumeswar range. On the north-east the Uria, and on the south-east the Lal-Bakya and Baghmata constitute natural boundaries; and on the west the district is separated from Gorakhpur and Saran by the present channel and an old bed of the Gandak.

Configura-  
tion.

In shape, Champaran roughly resembles an irregular parallelogram, extending along the eastern bank of the Gandak for 100 miles, and having a breadth of 20 miles at the northern and of 40 miles at the southern extremity. The general aspect of the greater part of the district is very similar to that of the rest of North Bihar, a flat cultivated expanse diversified by numerous large groves of mango trees and intersected by a number of rivers and streams debouching from Nepal. In the south and east the country is almost perfectly level with a very slight declination to the south; and the general character of the scenery is tame and monotonous. Towards the north and north-west the country begins to undulate and the alluvial plain gives place to a broken hilly region known as the Dun or Ramnagar Dun. This consists of a range of low hills, about 20 miles long, north of which the Sumeswar range extends for about 46 miles along the northern frontier. Below these hills extend southwards and eastwards large grassy prairies watered by numerous hill-streams, while in the back-ground tower the Himalayas of Nepal in an imposing arc of eternal snow.

Natural  
divisions.

The district includes four distinct tracts. To the extreme north are the foot-hills of the Himalayas known as the Sumeswar and Dun ranges, which with their foot-hills encroach for some 15 miles into the alluvial plain. These hills still contain large stretches of jungle and forest, though the finest timber has long since been cleared away. Skirting these hills is the unhealthy submontane tract, known as the Tarai, consisting mostly of prairie land and forest, in which the scattered clearances of the aboriginal Tharus afford the only evidence of human occupation. The rich and fertile plain



which occupies the rest of the district is divided by the Little Gandak into two well-defined tracts with markedly different characteristics. The northern portion is composed of old alluvium, and contains much lowland admirably suited for rice but unfit for the cultivation of indigo and *rabi* crops; it is a great rice-producing area traversed by a number of streams flowing southwards. The southern tract, which is composed of recent alluvium deposited during the oscillations of the Gandak while it shifted westwards to its present channel, is characterized by stretches of upland varied in places by large marshy depressions known as *chaur*s; here the soil is generally lighter and grows millets, pulses, cereals and oilseeds.

To the extreme north the Dun and Sumeswar hills extend over an area of about 364 square miles. The Sumeswar hills form a part of a long range, which, under different names, runs in practical continuity along the whole length of Nepal, the only breaks in the chain being caused by rivers seeking an outlet. It is the lowest and outermost of all the Himalayan ranges, immediately overlooking the plains of Hindustan; and at its base lies the swampy feverish Tarai. The hills of this range are mainly composed of imperfectly compacted sandstone, in which are imbedded rocks and pebbles of the same formation. Owing to this ill-formed sandstone, the hills have been worn by the action of rainfall into a series of steep ravines and almost inaccessible summits; and bare steep crags rise from the midst of the luxuriant vegetation with which many of its slopes are clothed.

HILL  
SYSTEM.

The average height of the range in this district is 1,500 feet, but the hills vary in altitude from a few hundred feet to 2,884 feet above sea level at Fort Sumeswar, which commands a superb view of the Himalayas. This peak overlooks the Mauri valley in Nepal and in the back-ground stretches the main range of the Himalayas, hill succeeding hill and peak rising above peak until they culminate in the vast snowy range to the north. The great peaks of Dhaulagiri (26,826), Gosaînthan (26,305) and Gourishankar are clearly visible; and the view is said to be, for extent, one of the finest obtainable from any place on the frontier line in British India. The ascent lies along the Sumeswar pass up the bed of the Juri Pani stream amid romantic scenery; this pass was commanded by a hill fort during the Nepal War of 1814-15. About 200 feet below the summit a bungalow



has been erected, as it was once hoped that the place might develop into a sanitarium for North Bihar. For this it is in many ways well adapted, as the temperature does not exceed 80 in the hot weather and there is a supply of pure water; but the place has the reputation of being unhealthy except from December to May. At the eastern extremity of the range, where the Kudi river pierces it, is situated the Bhikhna Thori pass through which a British force successfully marched into Nepal in 1815; and the other principal passes are the Kapan and Harha also leading to Deoghat in that State.

The only other hills in the district are the Dun hills, a range of low hills which extends for about 20 miles in a south-easterly direction from the north-west corner of the district, and has an average breadth of 4 to 5 miles. Between this and the Sumeswar range lies what is known as the Dun valley, an elevated table-land inhabited by aboriginal Tharus.

#### RIVER SYSTEM.

The general line of drainage is first from north to south, and then from north-west to south-east, the latter being the predominant course of the rivers. To the west the Gandak flows along the whole length of the district, except for a small strip of land, forming the Dhanaha police-station, which lies to the west of it adjoining Gorakhpur. To the north-east the Uria forms part of the boundary, while to the south-east the district is bounded throughout its length by the Lal Bakya and Baghmata rivers. Besides these boundary rivers, there are a considerable number of rivers and streams, of which the most important is the Little Gandak or Sikrana. The whole of the country north of this river is watered by a number of tributaries flowing almost due south from Nepal or the Sumeswar range; to the south there are only two considerable streams, both sluggish and with tortuous channels, in which the water remains almost stagnant except during the rains. The following is a description of the principal rivers, an account of their liability to flood will be found in Chapter VII.

#### Great Gandak.

The Gandak, or Great Gandak, rises in the central mountain basin of Nepal, which has been called, from time immemorial, the Sapt Gandaki or the country of the seven Gandaks, from the seven main streams which unite to form this river. After passing through the Deoghat hills, 30 miles



north of British territory, the united stream flows southwards in a succession of rapids and pools until it reaches the Sumeswar range near Tomaspur. Here the descent is very rapid and its course lies through a narrow gorge between high cliffs crowned with trees. The Gandak finally leaves the hills through a pass in the sandstone range to the west of the Sumeswar hills, at Tribeni, where it is joined by the Panchnad and Sonaha, the name Tribeni being suggested by the confluence of the three streams.

It then flows in a south-easterly direction separating the district from Gorakhpur for a distance of 28 miles, as far as Sattar Ghat. From this point down to Rajghat in the Bettiah subdivision the present channel of the Gandak ceases to be the natural boundary, and some 35 villages, in the jurisdiction of the Dhanaha police-station, are situated between it and the old channel of the river; the latter follows a tortuous course of 44 miles along the boundary of the Gorakhpur district until it joins the present channel near Pipra Ghat. The united stream then forms a natural boundary between Champaran and Saran till it leaves the district in the extreme south near Tajpur. A number of streams fall into it during its course through Champaran, such as the Rohua, Manaur and Bhabsa, which drain the low hills to the south of Tribeni; and several minor streams, which rise in the south of the tract known as Ramnagar Dun, pour their combined waters into it at Rajwatia near Bagaha.

At first a snow-fed torrent, the Gandak becomes much wider and its stream more equable in velocity after debouching into the plains at Tribeni; and boats come up thus far and take away cargoes of timber. Navigation, however, is difficult owing to the narrow and tortuous course of the river during the hot and cold seasons, and the impetuosity of its current during the rains; large boats rarely go beyond the shoals and rapids near Bagaha, but smaller craft ply as far as Lehra Ghat in Nepal. South of Bagaha it becomes a wide-spreading river, with sandy tracts being formed one year to be swept away the next. It is on record that the main stream was once diverted for over a mile in consequence of the obstruction caused by a boat laden with rice being sunk in its channel. In the rains the stream attains a breadth of 2 to 3 miles, and even in the hot and cold weather it is a quarter of a mile broad. After its entry



into British territory, the Gandak first flows over a rocky bed between high banks bordered with forests but it soon acquires the character of a deltaic river, its bed being raised considerably above the level of the surrounding country. The south of the district is consequently liable to inundation from the river overflowing its banks, but is now protected from its once disastrous floods by an embankment extending from near Bagaha to the southern extremity of Champaran.

The Gandak has been identified with the Kondochates of the Greek geographers and, according to Lassen, is the Sadanira or overflowing river of the epics. It is also known as the Narayani and the Salgrami, the latter name being derived from the *salgram* stones found in the bed of the river.

Little  
Gandak.

Next to the Great Gandak, the largest river in Champaran is the Little Gandak, which rises in the western extremity of the Sumeswar hills and flows through the centre of the district from north-west to south-east till it enters Muzaffarpur. During the first portion of its course, until it turns southwards at Lakhaura, north of Motihari, it is joined by a number of hill-streams, which make it an impetuous torrent in the rains. In the dry weather it is generally fordable, and it is navigable for a portion of its course towards the south by boats of small burden. This river rises with great rapidity in the rains, when it sometimes overflows its banks, causing serious inundations. It has frequently changed its course, its oscillations from side to side being facilitated by its banks being composed of sandy friable soil. In the northern portion of its course it is known as the Harha and in the southern portion as the Burh Gandak, but it is most commonly called the Sikrana by the local inhabitants.

Lalbegi and  
Dhanauti.

Between the Sikrana and the Great Gandak, the only important rivers are the Lalbegi and the Dhanauti. The former flows into the Gandak to the north of Gobindganj. The latter was formerly a branch of the Lalbegi, but its upper reaches have silted up, and it is now a sluggish stream falling into the Sikrana to the east of the Pipra factory. The area on its banks is reported to be very unhealthy, and a tract of country to the west of Motihari is sparsely populated on this account. A proposal was made during the famine of 1897 to reopen the connection which once existed between



the Gandak and Dhanauli, so as to ensure a flow of water along the bed of the latter, and thus render the neighbouring country more healthy; but the project was not carried out.

The Baghmati forms part of the eastern boundary from <sup>Baghmati.</sup> Adauri on the north to Norwa on the south, a distance of about 35 miles. Its current is very rapid sometimes reaching 7 miles an hour in its upper reaches during heavy freshets. It runs low during the cold season, and also when no rain has fallen; but after a few days' rain it often inundates the country far inland. It has changed its course several times, for the soil along its banks, being very light and friable, is easily washed away. In this portion of its course the river is navigable by boats of 15 to 18 tons burden as far as Maniari Ghat. Its principal tributary is the Lal Bakya which joins it near Adauri.

The other rivers are of minor importance, most of them <sup>Minor rivers.</sup> being hill-streams flowing into the Little Gandak in the northern portion of its course. Some of the streams, such as the Uria, Dhoram and Pandai are used for irrigation, but the supply in many cases is dependent on the Nepalese, who are able to control it by building embankments across the streams in their own territory. Some, such as Bhabsa, Manaur, Rohua and Panchnañ present some very picturesque scenes in the upper portion of their course, where the current strikes against high sandstone cliffs 20 to 90 feet high. The following is an account of the more important of these streams.

The Uria, which flows due south from Nepal, separates <sup>Uria.</sup> Champaran from Nepal for 12 miles, and then flows southwards through the district for 14 miles. It joins the Dhoram near Mainpur, and the united stream joins the Little Gandak about 3 miles west of Ahiraulia.

The Dhoram rises in the Churia Ghati hills, a low range <sup>Dhoram.</sup> of hills in Nepal, known locally as the Chiriaghatti hills, and enters Champaran about 5 miles south of the Nepal outpost station of Thori. At first it flows in a westerly direction for about 5 miles, but soon turns to the south and is joined by the Pandai, the united stream falling into the Uria near Mainpur, about 10 miles from the frontier.

The Pandai rises on the north of the Sumeswar range, <sup>Pandai.</sup> and enters the district through a pass between that range and the Churia Ghati range, at Bhikhna Thori. After it



debouches from the hills, it flows for a few miles towards the west over a rocky bed and then curves to the south-east in which direction it flows until it joins the Dhoram, about 2 miles east of Shikarpur.

**Masan.**

The Masan rises in the Sumeswar range, close to Fort Sumeswar, and flows in a southern direction until it turns to the east near Barbiro. It drains a large tract of country, receiving nearly all the flood water of the Dun, and is liable to heavy floods. Its catchment area is 150 square miles, three-fourths of which is hilly ground. It has a broad sandy bed throughout its course, and soon runs dry after the rains stop.

**Other rivers.**

The four rivers last mentioned all traverse the north of the district; and the same tract is watered by a number of smaller streams such as the Harbora, Balaura and Ramrekha. To the south-east one of the largest rivers debouching from Nepal is the Tilari, locally known as the Telawe, immediately to the north of Sugauli; this river is said never to run dry, and in October there is a depth of 4 to 5 feet in the stream, which is from 150 to 180 feet broad. The Gadhi, an adjoining stream, has a smaller supply, and the next stream of importance is the Pusa. The only other river in this portion of the district calling for separate mention is the Tiar, which feeds the canal of the same name.

**Lakes and marshes.**

A remarkable physical feature of Champaran is a chain of lakes 43 in number, running through the centre of the district. These lakes, of which the largest are at Lalsaraiya, Sugaon, Turkaulia, Motihari, Pipra, Siraha, Nawada, and Tetaria, extend over an area of 139 square miles, and evidently mark an old bed of the Great Gandak. Their depth varies from 3 to 20 feet, and the water, which is considered very unhealthy never entirely dries up. They contain a number of fish; and indigo factories were built on the banks of the greater number of them.

There are also a number of swamps and marshes scattered over the district, of which one of the most remarkable is the one known as Bahas along the borders of *tappas* Bahas and Balthar. This is a genuine bog during the greater part of the year, and even in the hot weather the prudent wayfarer cautiously feels his way with a stick or bamboo across the treacherous ground. This unpromising marsh, however,



produces fine crops of rice, the seed being sown broadcast from canoes.

The only forests left in the district are situated in the **FORESTS.** Bagaha and Shikarpur thanas to the north where a belt of forest and jungle stretches over an area of 290 square miles. Those on the Sumeswar range, which belong to the Ramnagar **Ramnagar Forest.** Raj, were leased for many years to European companies and

were systematically worked with the result that most of the best timber was removed. The last lease was held by Messrs. Dearn & Co. from 1890 to 1922. Since then no statistics are available for these forests but the most valuable trees found there are *sal* (*Shorea robusta*), *sisu* (*Dalbergia Sissoo*) and *tun* (*Cedrela Toona*). There is also a large tract of forest belonging to the Bettiah Raj in Rajpur Soheria in the extreme north-west corner of the district. **Bettiah Raj Forests.** The forests are called Rajpur Soheria from the name of the whole Tappa. There is a settlement called Soheriah, which once was of more importance than it is now and Rajpore is probably so called from an old fort of that name south of Naurangia village. The forests are classified into two separate areas—(A) a tract of *Sal* forest in the Siwalik hills and (B) a tract of miscellaneous forest lying along the *diara* lands of the river Gandak from Tribeni or Rajpur Soheria to Rampore. The two tracts are separated by the Tribeni Canal. 'A' tract has an area of 50.99 square miles and lies on the outlying secondary range of the Siwalik hills, the rise being from 300 to about 750 feet. The upper plateaus grow excellent *sal* and other useful trees found in the tract are *arna*, *banji*, *karma kuswin*, *panan* and rosewood. Some grass lands and miscellaneous forests are included in this tract along the southern and western sides but *sal* is extending and replacing the miscellaneous trees. This tract was once the site of an ancient civilization. On the spurs of the hills are many remains of large brick forts, some huge and cleverly constructed stone-wells sunk through the rock, and immense lines of trenches and embankments of considerable height. The extent of these ruins, the numerous tanks, irrigation schemes and well-designed embankments show that a very large population must have existed with well-tended rice-fields and large herds of cattle. 'B' tract has an area of 50.86 square miles on which *sisu*, *semal*, *khair*, *karma* and rosewood are the most useful trees.\*

\* For these notes on the Bettiah forest I am indebted to Mr. J. M. Cameron formerly Forest Officer in the Bettiah Raj.



## GEOLOGY.

The Dun and Sumeswar hills in the extreme north which are a continuation of the Siwalik range are formed of ill-compacted sandstone, scored by the bare stony beds of the water-courses down which the streams rush with considerable force in the rains. Probably these Himalayan foot-hills were originally anti-clinal, the southern half of the anti-cline having disappeared, as there are no fossils in the strata. On the lower slopes of the hills the gravel beds are covered with forest in which sal predominates. In the lower ground at the foot of the hills which is called the Tarai the ground is more marshy and high grass replaces the forest. The remainder of the district is an alluvial plain, a large portion of which has been formed by the Great Gandak, the river which now forms the south-west boundary of the district but which formerly flowed through the centre. The whole of the tract between the old course of the river and the present channel has been subject to fluvial action within comparatively recent times, and the soil is the older alluvion which is a characteristic feature of the Gangetic plain. There are beds of *kankar* in parts of the district and saltpetre is found almost everywhere.

## Botany.

Botanically, Champaran may be divided into several distinct areas. To the north are the Sumeswar and Dun ranges covered with forest and scrub wood, and next comes a narrow, more or less sloping gravelly submontane tract covered, except along river beds, with forest, the constituent species of which are those that occur on the lower slopes of the mountains themselves. In existing river beds only a few tough flexible bushes occur; along abandoned shingly river courses the jungle is open and park-like, and the species are those characteristic of a drier climate than obtains in the forest alongside. The submontane forest is succeeded by a belt of swampy land of varying width, covered with long reedy grasses. Further out into the plain the ground, if so high as to be free from inundation, is in waste tracts usually covered with open jungle of a bushy character.

Nearly the whole of the rest of the district is under cultivation, and is bare or diversified with bamboos, palms, and orchards of mangoes, or less often groves of other trees. The tracts liable to inundation are mainly confined to the banks of the larger rivers, and are there often covered with a jungle of reeds and bushes, largely tamarisk, with a few



trees. To the south, however, the river courses widen considerably in proportion to their streams, and their beds contain little or no vegetation. The powerful current in the rains sweeps everything away : the shingly or sandy banks are at other seasons too dry to admit of much growth. But old river beds, marshes, lakes and such streams as are stagnant, or nearly so except after heavy rains, have a mass of vegetation while even small rivers with a gentle stream abound with water plants.

The belt of forest along the northern border of the district contains *sal* (*Shorea robusta*), *sisu* (*Dalbergia Sissoo*) and *tun* (*Cedrela Toona*), the red cotton tree (*Bombax malabaricum*) and *khair* (*Acacia catechu*) are also common. Bamboos thrive in the moist Tarai tract, *sabai* grass (*Ischoemum angustifolium*) and the *narkat* reed (*Amphadonax falcata*) are also valuable products and extensive thickets of tamarisk line the Gandak river. In the south cultivation is closer, and the crops leave room for little besides weeds, grasses and sedges, chiefly species of *Panicum* and *Cyperus*, though on patches of waste land thickets of *sisu* very rapidly appear. The sluggish streams and lakes are filled with water weeds, the sides being often fringed by reedy grasses bulrushes and tamarisk. Near villages, small shrubberies may be found containing mango, *sisu*, *Eugenia jambolana*, various species of *Ficus* and occasional tamarind, and a few other semi-spontaneous and more or less useful species. Both the palmyra (*Borassus flabellifer*) and date-palm (*Phoenix sylvestris*) occur planted and at times self-sown but neither in great abundance.

The carnivora of Champaran comprise tiger, leopard, FAUNA.  
panther, bear, wild dog and other smaller species. The ungulata are sambar, spotted deer, hog deer, barking deer, *nilgai*, antelope and wild pig. Very rarely serow rhino and bison have been seen. Tigers are found in the jungles in the extreme north of the district bordering on the Nepal hills. They are not very numerous and as game is plentiful they do comparatively little damage. Occasionally through old age or some other causes one may take to man-eating. This happened in 1903 and 1904 when several wood-cutters in the Ramnagar forests were carried off and also a priest of the Roman Catholic Mission at Bettiah was killed close to the Sumeswar bungalow while climbing the hills. The tiger was finally destroyed by poison on its own hill. Treeleopard and



panther and bear are also found in these forests but not often much further south. A few leopards were killed by Mr. Murray and Mr. Gwyther close to Naraipur not many years ago but lately none have been found there. Wolves and hyænas were formerly fairly numerous in parts of the district but are now quite extinct. From time to time children have been carried off by jackals which may have wolf blood in them. In Motihari thana in 1922 over fifty children were killed by jackals until with the aid of jackal callers a number were destroyed by shooting. It is also known that children have been carried off by fishing cats which are fairly numerous throughout the district.

Wild pig are numerous on the *diaras* of the Gandak and in the jungles but are now comparatively scarce elsewhere in the district. This is due to increased cultivation and to more grass being cut than was formerly the case. Pig-sticking, which was formerly such a well-known and favourite sport in the district, has now almost entirely died out. This is due to the fact that the pig have taken to more difficult cover and also since the advent of the motor car and the higher cost of ponies fewer ponies are kept by the planters and others. *Sambar* are fairly numerous in the hills and heavy jungle in the north but as a rule they have poor heads compared with those of Central India. Spotted deer, barking deer and black buck are also found in the north. Hog deer are found in some of the *diaras* of the Gandak. *Nilgai* are common all over the district, wherever there is a stretch of grass or jungle. They do a good deal of damage but as a rule Hindus will not destroy them as they consider them to be of the cow species.

#### Game birds.

The game birds of Champaran are the peafowl, jungle fowl, Nepal *kalij* pheasant, black, grey and marsh partridge and both kinds of florican, the lesser being the more common, as the former is now very rare. A woodcock was shot in Sugaon in 1922 by Mr. W. N. R. Kemp but they are not usually found anywhere in the district. Pintailed snipe and common snipe are found in suitable localities throughout the district, and grey quail and button quail are common. Many kinds of duck and teal come in, in the cold weather, the most common being the red-headed and white-eyed pochards, the pintail, the gadwall, Brahminy duck, common teal, cotton teal and small whistler.

#### Fish.

The rivers contain *buali*, *rohu*, *tengra*, *bachwa*, and other species; and *rohu*, *naini*, *katla* and *buali* are found in the lakes



and some artificial tanks. Mahseer are found in the upper reaches of the Great Gandak. The *garial* or fish-eating alligator and the snub-nosed mugger or crocodile are common in both Gandaks. Some of the latter occasionally attack human beings and cattle.

Champan at one time had the reputation of having the <sup>CLIMATE.</sup> worst climate in Bihar, but this is only true of the Tari, in the north in the neighbourhood of Ramnagar, Bagaha and Shikarpur. Except in these tracts the climate is comparatively healthy. It is cooler and damper than the adjoining districts and therefore in the rainy season fever is rather more prevalent. The cold weather starts early and it is generally possible to dispense with punkahs after the first week in October. The hot weather begins about the end of March.

The rainfall is heavier than in any other district in Tirhut, <sup>Rainfall.</sup> and is especially heavy in the submontane tract, partly owing to the heavy showers which fall when cyclonic storms break up on reaching the hills and partly because the monsoon current is stronger towards the west over the districts just under the hills. For the last five years 1926 to 1930 inclusive the average annual rainfall for the district is 51.15 inches. In 1907 the average district rainfall was recorded as 54.09 inches. It is interesting to note that at Naraipur which is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of Bagaha the rainfall taken in decade has been as follows:— 1909 to 1918 average rainfall 67.70 inches, 1919 to 1928 average rainfall 51.88 inches, a difference of 16 inches a year. As a rule the monsoon starts about the middle of June but the monthly falls vary considerably every year.



## CHAMPARAN.

## CHAPTER II.

## HISTORY.

LEGENDARY  
HISTORY.

LEGENDARY history, local tradition, the names of places and archæological remains, all point to a prehistoric past. Local tradition asserts that in the early ages Champaran was a dense primeval forest, in whose solitude Brahman hermits studied the *aranyakas*, which, as their name implies, were to be read in silvan retreats; and the name Champaran itself is said to be derived from the fact that the district was formerly one vast forest (*aranya*) of *champa* trees. It is, at least, certain that in the Vishnu and other Puranas mention is often made of a Champak-aranya stretching along the Salgrami or Narayani river, which is another name for the Gandak; and according to the descriptions contained in ancient writings, it was a place of retreat for Hindu ascetics, where, removed from worldly ambitions, they could contemplate the Eternal Presence in the silence of a vast untrodden forest. Various parts of the district are also connected by immemorial tradition with many of the great Hindu *rishis*. Thus, *tappa* Duho Suho is said to be so-called after the two wives of Raja Uttanpada, Du Rani and Su Rani, and to have been the *tapoban* or silvan retreat of his son Dhruba. Legend relates that in consequence of the jealousy of his favourite wife, Su Rani, the Raja sent Du Rani into exile. Shortly afterwards, while hunting in the forest, he lost his way, took shelter in the humble cottage belonging to the banished queen, and spent the night there. Dhruba was subsequently born in the forest, and there gave himself up from early infancy to the contemplation of heavenly things.

Other *tappas* have also names associated with different Hindu sages, such as Chanki, Deoraj, Mando, Sugaon and Jamhauli; and the whole district is dotted over with places held in religious esteem as the traditional abodes of Hindu *rishis*, such as Valmiki, in whose hermitage Sita, the banished spouse of Rama, is said to have taken shelter. This great sage is reputed to have resided near Sangrampur, and the village is believed to be indebted for its name (which means the city of the battle) to the famous fight between Rama and his two sons, Lava and Kusha. The popular belief also is that within this



district lay the kingdom of Virat mentioned in the Mahabharata as the tract within which the Pandavas spent the last year of their weary 12 years' exile; and that its capital, where the five brothers resided a year, was situated at or near a village called Vairati, 6 or 7 miles west of Ramnagar.

Apart, however, from these traditions, it seems probable that Champaran was occupied at an early period by races of Aryan descent and formed part of the country in which the Videhas settled after their migration from the Punjab. According to the legend preserved in Vedic literature, Agni, the god of fire, accompanied the Videhas in their march eastwards from the banks of the Saraswati, and when they came to the broad stream of the Gandak, informed them that their home lay to the east of that river. Thenceforward the Videhas lived to the east of the Gandak, where they cleared the forests, cultivated the virgin soil, and founded a great and powerful kingdom. This kingdom was in course of time ruled over by king Janaka, who is said by local legend to have lived at Chankigarh, known locally as Jankigarh, 11 miles north of Lauriya Nandangarh. Under his rule, according to Hindu mythology, the kingdom of Mithila was the most civilized kingdom in India. His court was a centre of learning and attracted all the most learned men of the time; Vedic literature was enriched by the studies of the scholars who flocked there; his chief priest, Yajnavalkya, inaugurated the stupendous task of revising the Yajur Vedas; and the speculations of the monarch himself, enshrined in the sacred works called the Upanishads, are still cherished with veneration by the Hindu community.

The earliest event which can claim historic reality is the rise of the Vrijiian oligarchical republic, which apparently replaced the old monarchical rule of Videha, while the centre of power shifted from Mithila to Vaisali, the modern Basarh in the adjoining district of Muzaffarpur. The Vrijiians, it has been suggested, were in all probability Scythian invaders whose power reached as far as the Ganges to the south and the Himalayas on the north.\* They founded a confederacy consisting of several clans, among whom the most powerful were the Lichchhavis, who held the tract now known as Tirhut. At the close of the 6th century B. C. the growing power of the latter brought them into collision with the rising kingdom of Magadha,

EARLY  
HISTORIC  
PERIOD.

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\* S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World* (1884), p. xvi.



the limits of which roughly corresponded with the present districts of Patna and Gaya. For some time Ajatasatru, the king of this tract, had been engaged in extending his rule over neighbouring states, and his ambition now induced him to undertake the conquest of the Lichchhavis. The invasion was successful; the Lichchhavi capital, Vaisali, was occupied; and Ajatasatru became master of Tirhut. It is probable that the invader carried his victorious arms to their natural limit, the foot of the mountains, and that from this time the whole country between the Ganges and the Himalayas became subject, more or less directly, to the suzerainty of Magadha.\*

But few remains of the early period are left, though it has been suggested that in this district Motihari, Kesariya, Simraon and Lauriya Nandangarh were once capitals of the Vrijjian tribes.† At Nandangarh great mounds of earth are still extant which have been attributed to this race; and it has been conjectured that they were erected to serve as sepulchral barrows for their rulers. In one of them a small punch-marked silver coin has been found, which is anterior to the time of Alexander the Great and may be as old as 1000 B.C.; and it seems at least certain that they were erected before the rise and spread of Buddhism. A few places in Champaran may be associated with the life of the great founder of that religion. According to Buddhist tradition, Buddha rode forth by night from his father's house on his favourite white steed, Kanthaka, accompanied by his charioteer, Chandaka, and after crossing the river Anoma bade him return with the horse, stripped himself of his princely dress and ornaments, cut his hair, and assumed the outward aspect and character of an ascetic. The village of Bihar in this district, east of the Gandak, is said to mark the traditional site of Chandaka's return, and the name at least indicates that it once contained a Buddhist monastery (*vihara*).‡ Buddha subsequently returned in answer to an appeal from the Vrijjians, who implored him to deliver them from a pestilence which devastated their country. Here he made many converts; and at the end of his long ministry he passed through Champaran on his last march from Vaisali to Kusinara, the scene of his death: Lauriya Nandangarh or its neighbourhood is believed by some to be the site of the "Ashes stupa" erected over the ashes or charcoal taken from his funeral pyre.‡

\* V. A. Smith, *Early History of India* (1904), p. 30.

† A. Cunningham, *Ancient Geography of India* (1871), p. 445.

‡ V. A. Smith, *Kusinara or Kusinagara*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1902.



Although the Lichchhavis had been defeated, the powerful Asoka's Vrijjian confederacy does not appear to have been broken up; reign. and this district and Muzaffarpur continued to form part of their territory, under the suzerainty of the king of Magadha. In the fourth century B.C. it passed under the sway of the Mauryan Emperor; and records and memorials of that dynasty exist to this day in the great pillars erected by Asoka, in the 21st year of his reign, when he made a tour to the sacred sites of Buddhism. The Emperor's line of march probably followed the route taken by Buddha on the way to his death, and is marked in this district by a stupa at Kesariya and by the pillars of Lauriya Araraj, Lauriya Nandangarh and Rampurwa. Nepal was at this time an integral part of the empire and was probably administered directly from the capital as one of the home provinces. The royal road to it from Pataliputra led first to Vaisali and then passed Kesariya, Lauriya Araraj, Bettiah, Lauriya Nandangarh, Chankigarh and Rampurwa in this district, entering the hills by the Bhikhna Thori pass.

This appears also to have been a pilgrim road, and was Chinese followed at least in part by the Chinese pilgrim Fa Hian, who pilgrims. about 400 A.D. visited the site of Chandaka's return, then proceeded to the Ashes stupa and after going on to Kusinagara returned to Vaisali. The next mention of this part of the country appears to occur in the account of his travels left by Sung-yun, who visited the north-west of India in 518, and found it in possession of a race of Huns, who had conquered or received tribute from more than 40 countries, among which he mentions Tieh-lo in the south. The symbols Tieh-lo possibly represent Tirabhukti, the present Tirhut and the old land of the Vrijjians. This conquest was achieved two generations before Sung-yun's time, and from other sources we know that towards the close of the fifth century the White Huns of the Oxus valley penetrated into the heart of the Gangetic provinces and overcame the Gupta Emperor, who at this time ruled Champaran.\*

Neither Fa Hian nor Sung-yun left any account from which an insight can be gained into the conditions prevailing in this part of the country, but a detailed description is given by Hiuen Tsiang, the prince of Chinese pilgrims, who travelled

\* A sculptured column at Kahaon in the east of the Gorakhpur district records the fact that the rule of Skandagupta included the Eastern Provinces in the year 460, and characterizes his rule as tranquil. V. A. Smith, *Early History of India* (1904), p. 629.



through Champaran in the first half of the seventh century, on his way from the Lumbini Garden to Kusinagara. The first place which he visited in this district was the site of Chandaka's return, which he mentions as being situated in the kingdom of Rama, a kingdom which had been waste and desolate for many years, the towns being decayed and the inhabitants few. The site of Chandaka's return was commemorated by a great stupa built by Asoka in the midst of dense forest. Leaving this place, he proceeded south-east through the middle of a desert to the stupa built over the ashes of Buddha, by which were an old Buddhist monastery and another large stupa built by Asoka, mostly in ruins but still 100 feet high. From this place he went north-east to Kusinagara "through a great forest along a dangerous and difficult road, where wild oxen and herds of elephants, and robbers and hunters cause incessant troubles to travellers". This account sufficiently shows that the northern part of Champaran was still almost an uninhabited waste.

Tibetan  
invasion.

At the time of Hiuen's Tsiang's visit Tirhut formed part of the territory acknowledging the sway of Harshavardhana or Siladitya, who possessed full sovereign power over Western and Central Bengal, and exercised a certain amount of control as far east as Assam. On his death in 648, one of his ministers, Arjuna, usurped the throne, and attacked a mission which was on its way from the Emperor of China. "The members of the escort were massacred, and the property of the mission plundered; but the envoys, Wang-hiuen-tse and his colleague, were fortunate enough to escape into Nepal by night. The reigning king of Tibet, the famous Strongtsan Gampo, who was married to a Chinese princess, succoured the fugitives, and supplied them with a force of 1,000 horsemen, which co-operated with a Nepalese contingent of 7,000 men. With this small army Wang-hiuen-tse descended into the plains, and, after a three days' siege, succeeded in storming the chief city of Tirhut. Three thousand of the garrison were beheaded, and 10,000 persons were drowned in the neighbouring river. Arjuna fled, and having collected a fresh force, offered battle. He was again disastrously defeated and taken prisoner. The victor promptly beheaded a thousand prisoners; and in a latter action captured the entire royal family, took 12,000 prisoners, and obtained 30,000 head of cattle."\* Five hundred and eighty walled towns made their submission, and Arjuna was

\* V. A. Smith, *Early History of India* (1904), pp. 298-299.



carried off in chains to China. Wang-hiuen-tse once more visited the scene of his adventures, being sent by Imperial order in 657 A.D. to offer robes at the Buddhist holy places. He entered India through Nepal, probably by the old pilgrim route through the Bhikna Thori pass, and thence marched through to Vaisali, Bodh Gaya and other sacred spots.\*

From this time there is no clear record of the history of **MEDIAEVAL** Tirhut until the ascendancy of the Pala dynasty (800—1200). **PERIOD.** We know that Nepal, which had been a tributary state, recovered its independence 10 years after the death of Harsha; and it appears probable that in Champaran also the local chiefs asserted their autonomy and that the country was divided among a number of petty potentates. Early in the ninth century Gopala, the founder of the Pala dynasty, became ruler of Bengal, and towards the close of his life (circ. 850 A.D.) he extended his power westward over Bihar. In the 10th century we find the Mithilas mentioned among the races against whom Yasovarman, the Chandella king of Jejabhukti (circ. 925), claimed to have warred successfully;† and early in the 11th century Tirhut seems to have passed under the rule of the Kalachuri kings of Chedi, a tract corresponding to the present Central Provinces, for in 1019 A.D. it acknowledged the sovereignty of Gangeyadeva,‡ one of the most ambitious of the Chedi kings, who aimed at attaining paramount power in Northern India. The end of that century witnessed the rise of the power of the Sena kings, who not only wrested the eastern provinces from the Palas, but also appear to have carried their arms northwards to North Bihar. Mithila formed the north-western province of the kingdom of the Senas, and their rule in this part of Bihar is still commemorated by the use of the Lakshmana Sena era, the first current year (1119-20 A.D.) of which was apparently the date of either the accession or the coronation of Lakshmana Sena, the last great king of the Sena dynasty.

In the beginning of the 13th century the tide of Muham- **MUHAM-** madan conquest swept over Bihar, but it does not appear to **MADAN** have reached far north of the Ganges; for it is not till the **PERIOD.** time of Ghias-ud-din Iwaz, the Muhammadan Governor of Bengal between 1211 and 1226, that we learn that the banner of Islam was triumphantly carried into the territories of the

\* V. A. Smith, *Early History of India* (1904), pp. 298-299.

† C. M. Duff, *Chronology of India* (1899), p. 87.

‡ Prof. C. Bendall, *History of Nepal and Surrounding Kingdoms*, J. A. S. B., Part I, 1903.



Raja of Tirhut, which had never before been subdued, and the Raja compelled to pay tribute. This appears, however, to have been rather a successful invasion than an effectual conquest of the country; for a local dynasty of Hindu kings was established about this time\* at Simraon in the north-east corner of the district; and these kings succeeded in maintaining their rule over Tirhut for over a century, until the invasion of Tughlak Shah in 1323 put an end to their independence.

Simraon  
dynasty.

Of the earlier kings of this dynasty we have only traditional accounts. Its founder was one Nana or Nanyupa Deva, who is said to have established himself at Simraon, to have subdued the whole of Mithila, and to have overcome the king of Nepal. Tradition relates that one of his sons reigned in Nepal, and the other, Ganga Deva, in Mithila. The latter is credited with having introduced the system of fiscal divisions or *parganas* for the purposes of revenue administration; while a *chaudhri* or headman was appointed in each *pargana* to collect the revenue, and a *panchayat* was chosen to settle all disputes. Ganga Deva was succeeded by his son Narsingh Deva, who is said to have had a quarrel with his kinsman, the king of Nepal, the upshot of which was that Mithila and Nepal were separated never to be united again. Ram Singh Deva, who succeeded his father on the throne, was a pious devotee and a firm patron of sacred literature. Under his auspices, several well-known commentaries on the Vedas were compiled; rules were framed for the guidance of Hindus in their religious and social observances; and an officer was appointed in each village to adjudicate upon all questions arising from the working of these new canons of conduct. Various reforms in the system of internal administration are also attributed to this king. In every village a police officer was appointed whose duty it was to make a daily report of all occurrences worthy of note to the *chaudhri* or head revenue-collector of the *pargana*; the latter being assigned, in return for his services, a certain quantity of land, the produce of which was appropriated by him and his heirs in office. To the same period too is assigned the rise of the system of *patwaris* or village accountants, who were, it is said, paid at the rate

\* The traditional date of the foundation of Simraon is the Samvat year 1154 or 1097 A.D. But as Hara Singh Deva, the fifth in descent from its founder Nanyupa, fled to Nepal in 1323 A.D., the date should probably be referred to the Saka era, which would place the foundation of the capital in 1232 A.D. See Reports Arch. Surv. Ind., Vol. XVI, pp. 1-5.



of Rs. 10 a month from the village funds. On the death of Ram Singh Deva, his son Sakti Singh ascended the throne, but his despotism appears to have offended the nobles, and one of his ministers established a council of seven elders as a check upon the autocratic power of the king.

Hara Singh Deva, the son of Sakti Singh, was the last but, in popular esteem, the greatest of the line. It was this king, it is believed, who grouped the Maithil Brahmans into the three main divisions of Srotiya, Jog and Jaiwar, made a classification of the sub-castes according to *mels* and *dihs*, introduced the other matrimonial arrangements prevailing to this day, and established the order of Panjiaras or genealogists, who keep intact the purity of the Brahman blood; the latter measure is said to have been taken by him in consequence of one of his ministers having married, in ignorance, a lady within the prohibited degrees of relationship. With this king at least we enter upon historical ground. In 1323 the Emperor Tughlak Shah led his victorious forces into Tirhut on his march back from the defeat of Bahadur Shah, the rebellious Governor of Bengal, and proceeded to reduce this outlying portion of the empire. Hara Singh fell back on the capital, Simraon, but this was soon taken and reduced to ruins. Ferishta gives the following account of its capture:—“As the king was passing near the hills of Tirhut, the Raja appeared in arms, but was pursued into the woods. Finding his army could not penetrate them, the king alighted from his horse, called for a hatchet, and cut down one of the trees with his own hand. The troops, on seeing this, applied themselves to work with such spirit that the forest seemed to vanish before them. They arrived at length at a fort surrounded by seven ditches, full of water, and a high wall. The king invested the place, filled up the ditches, and destroyed the wall in three weeks. The Raja and his family were taken and great booty obtained.” The account generally received is that Hara Singh escaped to Nepal and conquered it, and that his descendants continued to rule that country till they were displaced by Prithwi Narayan on the Gurkha conquest of Nepal in 1769.\* Recent researches, however, seem to show that neither Hara Singh nor his ancestors succeeded in maintaining any effectual authority over Nepal, and Professor Bendall sums up the position of this dynasty as follows:—“Until more evidence is forthcoming, it seems

\* See Oldfield's Sketches from Nepal, Vol. I, 1880.



safer to regard Hara Singh and his ancestors, who reigned in Tirhut, Simraon, and also possibly other parts of the Nepal Tarai, as at most titular kings of Nepal, even if they really claimed sovereignty over the valley of Nepal at all.\*

Sugaon or  
Thakur  
dynasty.

With the flight of Hara Singh, Tirhut became a dependency of the empire of Delhi, and Tughlak Shah placed it under Kameshwara Thakur, the founder of the Sugaon or Thakur dynasty, which continued to rule over Tirhut till early in the 16th century. Here, as elsewhere, the Muhammadan conquest passed over the land without sweeping away all the ancient landmarks. So long as they acknowledged their submission to the Muhammadans by the payment of an annual tribute, the Hindu rulers of Tirhut were practically independent; but their tenure of power always depended solely on the pleasure of their Muhammadan over-lords. The first of the line, Kameshwara, was deposed by Firoz Shah (1353), who gave the empty throne to Bhogiswara, the younger son of Kameshwara and his own personal friend. Kirtti Singh, the second in descent from Bhogiswara, was also a younger son, who similarly obtained a principality as a personal favour from the Emperor, as a result of a visit to Delhi.

The most famous of the whole line, Siva Singh, rebelled in 1402 A.D., and succeeded in establishing his independence, but his triumph was short-lived, as three years afterwards he was conquered by the Musalmans and carried off to Delhi; while his wife, Lakshima Thakurani, accompanied by the poet Vidyapati, took refuge in Nepal, and there committed *sati* when no news of her husband had been received for 12 years. The memory of Siva Singh is still preserved among the people as the greatest of their kings, but his chief claim to fame is that he was a royal patron of learning. Not only was his wife, Lakshima, one of the few learned women of India, but his court was frequented by poets and scholars, of whom Vidyapati was at once the most famous and the most faithful. In this respect, Siva Singh was true to the traditions of his house. Like the Senas, who are said to have devoted their efforts to collecting troops of poems rather than to marshalling armies of soldiers, these Brahman princes were noted for their encouragement of learning and the fine arts. Their courts were said to be the

\* Prof. C. Bendall, *History of Nepal and Surrounding Kingdoms*, J. A. S. B., Vol. LXXII, Part I, 1903.



asylum of Sanskrit *belles lettres* and philosophy; and they lived immersed in the study of sacred books and poems.\*

The Sugaon dynasty continued to hold the north of Tirhut as tributary princes for about a century after the capture of Hara Singh. Towards the close of the 15th century it appears to have been included within the territory of Husain Shah, king of Bengal (1493—1518), who built a line of forts from Kamrup in Assam as far as Bettiah to protect the country against the hill tribes; but by a treaty, concluded at Barh in 1499, between him and the Emperor Sikandar Lodi it was agreed that the latter should retain Bihar, Tirhut and *Sarkar Saran* on condition that he did not invade Bengal; and Sikandar Lodi then swept down upon Tirhut. Unable to face the imperial forces, the Raja of Tirhut advanced to meet him, made his submission and was allowed to make terms on the payment of a fine amounting to several lakhs of rupees:† this Raja was probably Rambhadra or Rup Narayan, the tenth of the line, who is known to have ruled over Tirhut in 1495 when the *Gangakrityaviveka* was composed.‡ The treaty between the Emperor and the Bengal king was not long observed, for in the early part of the 16th century Nasrat Shah (1518—32) conquered Tirhut and extended his kingdom across the Gogra into the modern district of Ballia. The Raja of Tirhut (probably Lakshminath or Kansa Narayan) was put to death, and with him the Thakur dynasty was extinguished. Nasrat Shah appointed his son-in-law Viceroy of Tirhut, and thenceforward the country was administered by Muhammadan Governors.

Of Champaran itself we find no separate mention except in the *Wakiat-i-Mushtaki* by Sheikh Rizkulla Mushtaki, in which a spirited description is given of its invasion in the reign of Sikandar Lodi (1489—1517). According to the account left by this historian, Mian Husain Fermuli was *jagirdar* of Saran and Champaran, which were called *jalkhet* or the field of water, and he had taken no less than 20,000 villages from the infidels, besides those comprising his *jagir*. When he marched to attack the Raja of Champaran, he found his advance checked by a flood of the Gandak and was obliged to encamp on its banks, Invasion of Champaran.

\* *Vidyapati and His Contemporaries, and Some Mediæval King of Mithila*, by Dr. Grierson, *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XIV, 1885. and Vol. XXVIII, 1899.

† Sir H. Elliot, *History of India*, Vol. V (1873), p. 96.

‡ C. M. Duff, *Chronology of India* (1899), p. 266.



while the Raja remained secure in his fort on the other side of the river. One of his nobles, Mughula Kirani, however, was not daunted by this obstacle, though he was told that the breadth of the river was 7 kos (14 miles). Having taken a vow to hold all food and drink as unlawful as a carcase, until he had attacked the Raja, he mounted his horse and plunged into the river. Stimulated by this example, Mian Husain and the whole army began to cross the Gandak, and at sunset dashed upon the Raja, who had been lulled into security by the thought that he was protected from attack by the flooded state of the Gandak. "Suddenly," it is said, "an uproar rose in the city, for it was reported from the watch-tower that the Afghans had arrived; but the infidel did not credit it and was engaged in his pastimes, when the Afghans were upon him and forced him to fly for his life. By the will of God that day Mughula became a martyr. Mian Husain greatly lamented his loss, and said—'Would to God that to-day there had been no victory, for that and the plunder combined are no compensation for the loss sustained in the death of Mughula.' Thus, after a duration of 200 years, destruction fell upon the kingdom of the Raja; and all the riches and treasures which were amassed during that period were dispersed in plunder. The shoes of the infidels who lost their lives in this action were collected; and when melted down no less than 20,000 mohurs of gold were obtained from them."\*

LAST DAYS  
OF MUHAM-  
MADAN  
RULE.

Campaigns  
of Ali Vardi  
Khan.

After this, Champaran does not come into prominence until the last days of Muhammadan rule, when it appears that the Hindu chiefs were still practically independent.† In 1729 Ali Vardi Khan, who had been appointed Governor of Bihar under Shuja-ud-din, was sent to Patna at the head of a force of 5,000 men. On his arrival there he found the province in a state of disorder. It was infested by a band of robbers, called Banjaras, who, in the guise of peaceful traders and travellers, laid the country under contribution and plundered right and left. The zamindars of Bettiah and other places were also in a state of insurrection and had for some time set at defiance the authority of the Governor. In order to reduce these marauders and rebels, Ali Vardi Khan took into his service

\* Sir H. Elliot, *History of India*, pp. 546-47, Vol. IV, 1873.

† The Cheros of Palamau have a tradition that they invaded Champaran under one of their great chiefs, Sahabal, drove out the Raja, and laid waste the country to the foot of the Tarai. The Raja, flad, it is said, to the court of Jahangir, who ordered Islam Khan, the Viceroy of Bengal, to march to Champaran and reinstate him.



a body of Afghans under Abdul Karim Khan, who is described as being the chief of the Afghans of Darbhanga, and first sent them against the Banjaras. The expedition was successful, the Banjaras were routed, made to disgorge their plunder, and driven out of the country. Then, according to the Riyazu-s-Salatin, "Ali Vardi Khan, being aided by the Afghans, advanced with his forces against the tracts of the Rajas of Bettiah and Bhawarah, who were refractory and turbulent. Their regions had never previously been trod by the feet of the armies of former Nazims, nor had their proud heads ever bent before to any of the former Subahdars. Indeed, they had never before paid the imperial revenues and taxes. After fighting with them incessantly, Ali Vardi Khan became victorious and triumphant. Raiding and pillaging their tracts, Ali Vardi Khan carried off a large booty, amounting to several lakhs in specie and other effects; and settling with the Rajas the amounts of tribute, presents and the imperial revenue, he raised an immense sum. The soldiery also were enriched by the booty, and the strength of Ali Vardi's administration increased."\*

Subsequently, in 1748, Ali Vardi Khan, who had in the meantime been raised to the Nawabship of Bengal, was forced to return to Champaran in consequence of the rebellion of his former allies, the Afghans of Darbhanga. The latter had risen under Shamsheer Khan, murdered Ali Vardi's son-in-law Zain-ud-din or Hiahat Jang, the Governor of Bihar, and sacked Patna. Ali Vardi Khan hurried up by forced marches from Bengal, completely defeated the Afghans and their allies, the Marathas, and marched in triumph to Patna. There he received a message from the Raja of Bettiah, saying that he had given shelter to the families of Shamsheer Khan and Sardar Khan, another Afghan leader, and was ready to pay the Nawab 3 lakhs of rupees if he would agree not to demand their surrender. The Nawab refused to treat with him, insisted on the unconditional surrender of the families of the Afghan chiefs, and advanced towards Bettiah to enforce his demands. The Raja, thereupon, quietly gave up the wife and daughters of Shamsheer Khan, who were treated with the utmost courtesy by Ali Vardi Khan.†

\* Maulvi Abdus Salam, *Translation of the Riyazu-s-Salatin*, Calcutta, 1904.

† Sair-ul-Mutakharin, Raymond's Translation (reprinted, Calcutta, 1902), Vol. II, p. 58.



Caillaud's  
campaign.

In 1760 Champaran again witnessed the march of contending armies. At this time the Emperor, Shah Alam, was engaged in the invasion of Bihar, and Khadim Husain Khan, the Governor of Purnea, marched to join him with an army composed of 6,000 horse, 10,000 foot, and 40 pieces of cannon. Before, however, he could effect a junction with the Emperor, Captain Knox had marched to the relief of Patna and driven off the besieging force. He followed up this blow by defeating the Governor of Purnea at Hajipur, and Khadim Husain fled precipitately northwards towards Bettiah. Shortly after this, a force commanded by Major Caillaud and Miran, the son of Mir Jafar Khan, hurried up and set out in pursuit. In an action fought on the 25th June the enemy were routed, leaving behind their guns, a large quantity of ammunition and stores, and all their heavy baggage. The rains had now set in, the Gandak was in flood, and Khadim Husain Khan was unable to procure boats and cross it. He, therefore, fell back towards the hills, closely pressed by Caillaud and Miran; and here his army lost their way and were dispersed in the dense forest. "At day-break," it is said, "his people could not discover the morning star, and concluded that it must be hidden by the chain of mountains close to which they supposed themselves to be."\* Their position was, in fact, desperate, with a river in front, and enemy in their rear, and the soldiers dispirited and scattered; but fortunately for them, the plans of the invading force were completely altered by Miran being struck by lightning while sleeping in his tent near Bettiah. Thereupon, Caillaud, on whom the command of the allied forces now devolved, abandoned the campaign. He moved the army before the fort of Bettiah, received the submission of the Raja, and then marched off to Patna.†

Capture of  
Bettiah.

This submission appears to have been merely a shift to gain time, for we find that in 1762 Mir Kasim Ali was forced

\* The translator of the Sair-ul-Mutakharin gives a vivid picture of these forests:—"No man that has not seen the forests of India can have an idea of the darkness and horror by which a visitor is at once surrounded. Lofty trees eternally green, growing close together, intercept not only the light of the sun, but the very sight of the sky. Not a leaf is seen moving, not a bird is seen hopping about, save some crows; and chirping is as unknown there as would be an organ touched by a Handel. Such are the *sal* forests that bound Bengal on the north. Myriads of red ants, still more formidable by their enormous bigness than by their voracity, seem, as well as stupendous serpents, to be the only inhabitants of those lonely woods, that is, the western ones."

†Sair-ul-Mutakharin, and Broome's History of the Rise and Progress of the Bengal Army.



to send an expedition against the Raja. "The command of it," says the author of the Sair-ul-Mutakharin, "was given to Bahadur Ali Khan, who had been for a long time Grand-master of Artillery to Ali Vardi Khan and now enjoyed a small part of that office under Mir Kasim Khan. He had with him several commanders with their corps, together with some pieces of cannon in the English fashion, and some regiments of Talingas, disciplined by Gurgan Khan. His orders were to take the fortress of that name, and to chastise the zamindar of that country, who had proved unruly." This expedition appears to have been completely successful, for we learn later from the same work that, as the fortress of Bettiah had been taken but freshly and the country had been but lately brought under control, the Nawab availed himself of the pretence of establishing order in that region to set out on an expedition against Nepal.

This expedition, it is said, was undertaken at the instigation of the Nawab's Armenian General, Gurgan Khan. "As the country of Nepal was known to produce gold, as well as to be full of riches, Gurgan Khan, who had as much ambition as covetousness in his composition, wished to undertake an expedition thither. But he had another object in view; he wanted also to make a trial of the troops which he had disciplined, and of the artillery which he had trained. With this view, he had long before commenced connections with those crowds of Cashmirians and Sanyasis and Fakirs who yearly frequented those parts; he had likewise procured much information from some French priests that live at Latsa (Lhasa), insomuch that he became a proficient in the knowledge of the passes over the mountains and of the entrances into the country. He even attached to his service some of those men, whom he found to be endowed with understanding and capable of serving as guides in his expedition; for they had of themselves tendered their services on that head, and had first inspired him with the thoughts of conquering so wealthy a country."\*

In spite of these allies, the invasion was a disastrous failure. An advance force entered Champaran under Gurgan

\* This appears to be a reference to the Capuchin Mission which had established itself at Lhasa, but had by this time retired to Nepal and set up a branch station at Bettiah. A brief account of the fortunes of this Mission will be found in the articles on Bettiah and Chuhari in Chapter XV.



Khan and was followed by the main body under Mir Kasim Ali, who pitched his camp at Bettiah. Gurgan Khan then advanced to the north, and commenced the ascent of a pass through the hills. Here he was met by the Nepalese, and a short fight took place in which the Bengal army was successful. They pushed on to the summit and halted for the night, but no sooner was it dark than the Nepalese attacked and drove them back in disorder to the bottom of the pass. The whole force then fled in rout back to the main camp at Bettiah; and the Nawab, without making any further attempt to pierce the Nepalese defence, broke up his camp, and marched off to Patna (1763).

EARLY  
ENGLISH  
ADMINISTRA-  
TION.

Campaign of  
1766.

In 1764 Champaran passed with the rest of Bengal under British rule after the decisive battle of Buxar. A short campaign, however, was necessary before the authority of the British was acknowledged. Of this campaign there is the following account in Broome's History of the Rise and Progress of the Bengal Army (1850):—"In the beginning of 1766, Sir Robert Barker moved from Bankipore with a considerable detachment of his Brigade into the Bettiah country, to reduce a number of the refractory zamindars of that district, who, taking advantage of the troubles that had existed for the last two years, had shut themselves up in their strongholds and refused to pay any revenue, of which considerable arrears were now due. The judicious arrangements of Sir Robert Barker, and the efficient force at his disposal, led to a speedy and satisfactory adjustment of affairs in this quarter. Some little resistance appears to have been offered at first, but the inutility of such attempts being rendered very apparent, served to prevent any subsequent efforts of the same nature, and in a few months the whole country was brought into a state of complete subjection.

"Sir Robert Barker, in a letter to the Select Committee, dated from Camp at Rampur, 6th March 1766, gave a very favourable account of the resources of this district, with which even at the present time we are but scantily acquainted. He observes:—"Bettiah will, I think, be of considerable consequence to the Company. Its firs will afford masts for all the ships in India, which must produce a new and considerable trade with the other nations in India, as well as advantage to our own shipping. Gold and cinnamon are also here (the latter we gather in the jungles);



timbers as large as any I have seen; musk and elephants' teeth; besides many other commodities I have not yet got the knowledge of.' The Select Committee reported this circumstance to the Court of Directors, stating that they looked upon it 'rather as an article of curious intelligence than mere prospects of advantage to the Company'. At the same time, they expressed their determination of pushing the discovery to the utmost advantage, if the advices received met with confirmation."

In spite of this campaign, the early days of British administration were troubled ones. The Raja of Bettiah, Jugal Keshwar Singh, fell into arrears of revenue, and in the words of the Judges of the Diwani Adalat, "rebelled and fought with the forces of the British Government, was defeated and fled to Bundelkhund for safety, and his *Rajgi* was seized upon and brought under the direct management of the Company". This change only made matters worse, and in 1771 Mr. Golding, the Supervisor of *Sarkar* Champaran, reported that the country was in a state of desolation and ruin, hardly to be credited by any one who had not been a witness to it. As a remedy for the mischief he urged the restoration of the Raja to his estate. The Patna Council, accordingly, made conciliatory overtures to Jugal Keshwar Singh and persuaded him to return.\*

In the meantime, the British Government had come into collision with Nepal, where the Gurkhas under Prithwi Narayan were engaged in the conquest of the whole country. In order to explain the position of Government in their relations to the Nepalese, the following sketch of the previous history of the frontier is quoted, with some abbreviations, from Prinsep's Political and Military Transactions in India (1812—23), published in 1825. "From time immemorial the country within the hills and on the borders has been divided amongst petty Hindu Rajas, and the forest and Tarai had naturally been a perpetual bone of contention to them; a chieftain possessing fastnesses in the hills could always enforce contributions, by issuing thence and carrying off booty from those who hesitated to comply. Hence every hill Raja had a sweep of the forest and low country attached to his estate, and this he was continually endeavouring to extend either

Relations  
with Nepal.

\*See also Chapter XI, in which a brief account has been given of the system of administration introduced.



by intrigue or by violence. The superior wealth and greater number of followers at the command of some of the Rajas of the plains enabled them occasionally to penetrate and reduce to subjection a hill neighbour; but, ordinarily, such enterprises were beyond their skill or resources; and the border war was handed down from father to son, in their respective families."

"Neither Akbar nor any of his descendants on the throne of Delhi made any attempt to add the tract of hills to the Mughal empire; its revenue was not an object of cupidity, nor was its population sufficiently formidable to make the subjugation of the country necessary as an act of political precaution. The Rajas of the plains, on the other hand, though compelled to submit to the Musalman yoke, retained their territories, and became tributaries of the empire, which did not prevent their prosecuting their hereditary feuds with their neighbours."

"Such continued to be the state of this frontier, until the low countries fell under the British dominion, and the hills were gradually overrun by the Nepalese, and consolidated by them into one sovereignty. The British Government, assimilating its conduct to that of its predecessors, did not interfere with the possession of the Rajas in the plains; but contented itself with the regular payments of revenue. The Gurkhas, on the other hand, as each Raja in the hills successively fell before them, exterminated the family; and, becoming heir to all its possessions, took up likewise the old Raja's claims and contests with his neighbours. This brought them into contact with our zamindars, who were unable to maintain themselves against such an enemy, and generally therefore had to resign the object in dispute; for unless the encroachment was gross and easy of proof, it was vain to hope to interest the British Government in their favour."

Frontier  
disputes.

Shortly after the British occupation such an encroachment was brought to notice. The Raja of Bettiah had for a long time past been at war with the hill Raja of Makwanpur for the possession of different portions of the Tarai; and among other sources of dispute, each claimed part of the Simraon *pargana*. In 1743 the Makwanpur family granted Rautahat and Pachrauti, two *tappas* or subdivisions of this *pargana*, in *jagir* to one Abdullah Beg, who had influence enough with the Nawab of Bengal to have the tenure confirmed by him. The Bettiah Raja, who, there is reason to believe, was then



in possession, at first resisted; but in the end, also gave Abdullah a *sanad* for the same lands. Abdullah's tenure was thus secure, whichever claimant established his claims; but as the Makwanpur grant was the oldest in date and had been acknowledged at Murshidabad, this Raja's title to resume eventually acquired a kind of preference. In 1763, Prithwi Narayan, having subdued the Makwanpur Raja, claimed to succeed to his rights as Abdullah's feudal superior, with authority to resume the *jagir*; and after a year or two seized not only Abdullah's lands, but also 22 more villages, which he claimed as part of Rautahat. Abdullah fled to the English authorities, who took up his cause and subsequently made it a pretext for declaring war on Nepal.

The ulterior motive, however, appears to have been a desire to re-establish our trade with Nepal, which had been interrupted for some years in consequence of the subjugation of Makwanpur. In 1767 the Newar Raja of Katmandu, being hard-pressed by the Gurkhas, appealed to the British for assistance, and Mr. Golding, the Commercial Agent at Bettiah, who feared that the success of the Gurkhas would ruin the trade with Nepal, recommended that the opportunity should be taken to send an expedition to his succour. The British, accordingly, responded to the appeal of the Raja and sent a force under Major Kinloch to march to his relief.

Major Kinloch advanced into the hills in October 1767, Expedition but had not strength enough to establish a chain of depôts into Nepal. to secure his communications with the plains. Having penetrated as far as Hariharpur, he was detained there by an unfordable torrent, which carried away a bridge and raft he constructed. The delay thus caused exhausted his supplies, the deadly climate brought on sickness among the soldiers, and he was obliged to return early in December, the time when, properly, he should have set out. Having failed to penetrate into the hills, he was directed in January 1768 to occupy the whole Tarai as a means of recouping the expenses of the expedition. Abdullah then claimed his *jagir*, and Rautahat and Pachrauti were, accordingly, given up to him; but when peace was restored, the Nepalese sent an Agent to claim this territory as part of Makwanpur. This claim was opposed by the Bettiah Raja, and a long investigation ensued; but eventually in 1781 Warren Hastings decided, on the strength of the first deed of grant to Abdullah, that



Rautahat and Pachrauti belonged to Makwanpur, and were not part of Bettiah or Champaran. The 22 villages seized by Prithwi Narayan, and subsequently occupied by Major Kinloch in 1768, had, however, never been given up. Their restoration was not demanded, and the revenue due from them was collected as part of the *tappa* of Nonaur, which with Rautahat belonged to the *pargana* of Simraon but fell in the portion annexed to Champaran. At the Permanent Settlement Nonaur formed part of the land for which the Raja of Bettiah engaged; and till 1810 the 22 villages continued in his possession.

Nepalese  
aggression.

The Gurkhas, meanwhile, continued to present yearly to the British Government a large elephant as tribute for the cultivated lowlands occupied by them until 1801, when this tribute was relinquished by a treaty concluded at Dinapore, by which the Nepalese also agreed to the establishment of a residency at Katmandu. The alliance with the Darbar was dissolved in 1804 in consequence of their deliberate breach of faith and the indignities offered to the Resident; and for the next six years our transactions with Nepal consisted entirely of unavailing remonstrances against stealthy but systematic encroachments on our territory. In 1811, one Lakshmangir, the Gurkha Governor of Rautahat, crossed the frontier with a party of armed men, seized and stockaded Kewaya, one of the 22 villages occupied in Prithwi Narayan's time and began plundering and making collections in eight other villages alleging that they belonged to Rautahat. The Raja of Bettiah's people resisted this aggression, and an affray followed, in which Lakshmangir was killed.

The British Government directed the Assistant to the Magistrate of Saran to proceed to the frontier and make an enquiry; but, before he arrived there, a reinforcement had been sent down from Katmandu, which immediately seized the 22 disputed villages. Commissioners were now appointed by both Governments to enquire into and adjust all the frontier disputes, Major Bradshaw being appointed Commissioner on the part of the British Government and instructed to insist on the restitution of the 22 villages occupied by the Nepalese as a preliminary to any investigation of the claims set up by the Gurkhas. After much evasion, this condition was agreed to; but when he proposed to open the enquiry, the Nepalese Commissioners, pretending to have taken some personal offence



against the Major, refused to enter into any discussion with him, and suddenly returned to Katmandu, leaving him alone on the frontier (1814). Lord Hastings, thereupon, threatened the forcible occupation of the lands, if they were not evacuated by a fixed date; and the Gurkhas having failed to restore them, the disputed tracts were occupied by the British in April 1814. War was now inevitable, and it was formally declared on the 1st November 1814.\*

An arduous campaign ensued, but little fighting took place near this district. The plan of campaign provided for the main attack being delivered through the passes between the Great Gandak and Baghmata by a force of nearly 8,000 men with a strong force of artillery under General Marley, while another brigade was to follow the army and secure its depots and rear as it advanced into the hills. Before these forces took the field, Major Bradshaw, the British Commissioner, who was in military charge of the frontier and the disputed lands of Simraon, advanced against the Nepalese post of Barharwa prior to occupying the whole of the Tarai. The attack was successful, and the Tarai was evacuated by the Gurkhas and occupied by the British troops, the headquarters of the Champaran Light Infantry being posted at Baragarhi and two other stations established at Samanpur and Parsa. General Marley arrived at the frontier early in December, but he did little more than hold his position. He was staggered by the activity and enterprise of the Gurkhas, and was apprehensive for his train of heavy artillery which was coming up from Bettiah; and eventually he was superseded for incompetence.

In the meantime, the force under General Ochterlony had been most successful, and on the 28th November 1815 a treaty was concluded with the Nepalese at Sugauli. The ratification of the treaty, however, was withheld by the Darbar, who formally announced their intention of trying the result of a second campaign; and in 1816 General Ochterlony took command of the main army, which numbered nearly 20,000 men. This force was collected at Sugauli, where the General established his headquarters on the 22nd January 1816, and was divided into 4 brigades, one being directed to march through Ramnagar, while the main force under Ochterlony marched

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\*This sketch of the early relations with Nepal is based on the account given in Prinsep's Political and Military Transactions in India (1813—23), Vol. I, 1825.



due north to Makwanpur. The invasion, as is well known, was successful, and on the 2nd December 1816, the Nepalese at last delivered the treaty of Sugauli duly signed and executed, by which the British were granted the Tarai between the Rapti and Gandak, excepting Butwal Khas, and retained the portion between the Gandak and Coosah (Kosi) which they already occupied.

Raid of  
1840.

After the conclusion of this treaty, there was peace on the frontier until 1840, when the Nepalese took advantage of our reverses in Afghanistan to seize part of the north of the district. A party of about 40 or 50 Gurkha sepoys, under the command of an officer, entered the Ramnagar territory, on the occasion of a large fair, at which most of the inhabitants were present, and issued a proclamation notifying that the tract of land in question (7 or 8 miles wide, and 25 to 26 miles in length), which had formerly belonged to Nepal, but had been given to the Ramnagar Raja on the occasion of his marrying a Nepalese princess, had now, on the death of that princess, been resumed by Nepal; all local authorities were therefore directed on pain of severe punishment, not only to acknowledge the authority of the Darbar, but to pay their taxes and revenue into the treasury of Nepal. Friendly remonstrances were made, but were unattended to; and at last in October 1840, Government ordered the advance of a brigade under Colonel Oliver to enforce, if necessary, the immediate evacuation of our territory by the Gurkha troops, to watch the movements of the Nepalese, and to protect our subjects against any further aggressions. Seeing that we were in earnest in our demands, the Darbar reluctantly, but completely, yielded. The Gurkha troops were recalled and 91 villages, which they had occupied, were restored to their rightful and original owners. A corps of soldiers was, however, retained on the frontier till 1842.\*

THE MUTINY.

Since that time the peace of the district has only been broken by the Mutiny of 1857. Major Holmes was at this time in Command of the 12th Irregular Cavalry at Sugauli. As soon as danger began to threaten Bihar, he wrote to Canning, expressing, with great freedom and plainness, the view that stern and instant repression was the only policy for the times. Canning told him in reply that he was entirely wrong, and that his "bloody, off-hand measures"

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\*H. A. Oldfield, *Sketches from Nepal*, 1880.



were not the cure for the disease. "I am determined," he rejoined, "to keep order in these districts, and I will do it with a strong hand." His method was simple, but very effective. On his own responsibility, he placed the whole country between Patna and Gorakhpur under martial law. His only instrument for enforcing it was his single native regiment; but he thoroughly trusted his men, and, if they were not loyal to him in their hearts, they were so carried along by his daring spirit that they could not choose but do his bidding. Sending out parties to seize evil doers and protect the civil stations, and declaring that he would visit with instant death any one who showed the slightest sign of disaffection, he soon established such a terror of his name that none dared to stir a finger in the cause of rebellion.

These measures were set aside by the Local Government as soon as it learnt of them; but up to the 25th July there appeared to be no signs of disaffection in the regiment, and the men were doing splendid service. Holmes had reported most favourably of them, and had himself been quoted as an example of the truth of Lord Canning's axiom, that no regiment which was properly commanded would mutiny. But on the evening of the 26th, as he was driving out with his wife, a daughter of Sale, the heroic defender of Jalalabad, 4 sowars rode up to him with their swords drawn; and almost before he knew what they wanted, they had beheaded both himself and Mrs. Holmes. The regiment then rose, cut down the Deputy Post-Master, murdered the doctor (Dr. Gardiner), his wife and children (except one who escaped their notice), and fired their bungalow. After plundering the treasury, they marched to Siwan, where they attacked the house of Messrs. Lynch and McDonnell, the Deputy Magistrate and Sub-Deputy Opium Agent, and then marched towards Azimgarh. The bodies of Major and Mrs. Holmes and of Mr. Bennett were brought into Motihari by the police, those of Dr. Gardiner and his family being burnt in his bungalow. In view of the defenceless state of the station and the probability that the mutineers would attack it, Mr. Raikes, the Magistrate, left it, with the other civil officers and their families, and took refuge in a factory some miles away; but he returned almost immediately and refused again to abandon it, even on receipt of the Commissioner's order.

On the 30th July martial law was proclaimed by Government, and shortly afterwards Honorary Magistrates



were appointed from among the indigo-planters, and authorized to raise small bodies of police for the protection of their immediate neighbourhood. The arrival in August of two Gurkha regiments from Nepal soon restored confidence, and though there was some fear of an advance of rebels from Gorakhpur, the presence of the Gurkhas prevented any attack from that direction. An attempt was, indeed, made by a party of rebels, but they were quickly dispersed by a detachment of Gurkhas stationed at Bagaha Ghat. Towards the end of December Jang Bahadur with his Nepalese army arrived at Bettiah, and on the 26th a fight took place at Sahibganj, 5 miles from Pipra, between two regiments sent by Jang Bahadur and a party of rebels, who were completely defeated. On the same day a successful action was fought by Colonel Rowcroft at Sohanpur on the Gorakhpur frontier, and these successes had the effect of clearing the districts north of the Ganges.\*

#### FORMATION OF THE DISTRICT.

The only other event calling for record in the history of Champaran is its formation into a district. It originally formed part of the district of Saran with headquarters at Chapra, but in 1837 a Magistrate was stationed in Motihari; in 1852 the Bettiah subdivision was established; and in 1866 Champaran was converted into an independent district.

#### ARCHÆO- LOGY.

"Champaran," it has been said, "presents an immense field of archaeological research."† Many sites still await scientific exploration, but the remains already discovered are extremely interesting. Three of the pillars erected by Asoka are found in this district, viz., one at Lauriya Araraj near Gobindganj, another at Lauriya Nandangarh, 15 miles north of Bettiah, and a third, commonly known as the Rampurwa pillar, near Pipariya in the Shikarpur thana; these pillars which are perhaps the most important remains in the district, rank among the most valuable ancient monuments of India. Two miles south-west of Kesariya is an ancient Buddhist stupa, and on the road from that place to Pipra is a mound, called Sagardih, which evidently marks the ruins of another Buddhist stupa. At Lauriya Nandangarh are a great number of earthen barrows, possibly sepulchral mounds erected by

\*This account of the Mutiny has been compiled from The Parliamentary Papers. The Mutiny of the Bengal Army (1857-58), and Holmes' History of the Indian Mutiny (1891).

† V. A. Smith, *Introduction to Report on a Tour of Exploration of the Antiquities in the Tarai, Nepal*, by P. C. Mukherji, Calcutta 1901.



the Lichchhavis, besides a great mound which may represent the Ashes stupa of Buddhist historians; and at Chankigarh, 3 miles west of Shikarpur, is another remarkable mound. All these places, as already mentioned, were probably situated on the imperial road from Pataliputra (Patna), the capital of Asoka, to Kusinagara, the scene of Buddha's death, which is believed to have passed Basarh (Vaisali), Kesariya, Lauriya Araraj, Bettiah, Chankigarh, Rampurwa and the Bhikhna Thori pass. Remains of the ancient capital of Mithila are still extant at Simraon, 5 miles from the Purnahia factory; and other monuments and buildings of archæological interest are found at Nonachar, 5 miles east of Motihari, at Sitakund and Bediban close to the Pipra railway station, and at Bawangarhi near Soharia in the extreme north-west of the district. A detailed description of these remains will be found in Chapter XV.



## CHAMPARAN.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE PEOPLE.

**GROWTH OF POPULATION.** THE first census of the district, which was taken in 1872, showed a total population of 1,440,815 persons. It is unlikely that this figure is accurate as at that time the census was generally regarded with some suspicion. It was believed to be the preliminary to a poll-tax and also to a measure of conscription. At the census of 1881 the population was returned at 1,721,608 representing an increase of 19.5 per cent due partly to improved enumeration and partly to immigration from the adjoining districts to the sparsely-inhabited thanas in the north. The census of 1891 showed a further advance of 8 per cent, the population having risen to 1,859,465 mainly owing to the continual stream of immigration, the total number of persons born elsewhere but residing in Champaran having reached a total of 248,511. During the next decade the population decreased by 69,002 persons, the census return in 1901 being 1,790,463. This decrease was chiefly due to bad seasons, epidemics of cholera plague and fever and finally to the famine of 1897 and its consequences. The vitality of the people was lowered and the sequel of the famine was a reduced birth-rate and a high death-rate. At the same time immigration ceased and many settlers left the district to return to their old houses. The only thana in the district which did not show a decrease in population was Adapur which has an exceptionally fertile soil and was irrigated.

The population of the district made a remarkable recovery between 1901 and 1911, in which period it shows the largest proportional increase in the North Bihar districts. Just as in 1901 it showed the greatest proportional decrease. It does not appear that there was any very conspicuous improvement in public health during that decade 1901—1911 but the general impression was that the climate had improved. The census total in 1911 was 1,908,385 and in 1921 it was 1,940,841. The census of the present year 1931 shows a further increase, the total being 2,145,687 persons in the whole district.



The population is sparse in comparison with the neighbouring districts, the density at present being an average of 608 to the square mile, for the whole district. The density varies considerably throughout the district, the most thickly-populated area being in the Dhaka thana where there is an average of 963 persons per square mile. This may be attributed to the extreme fertility of the land and the existence of small but valuable canals in this thana. The pressure of population is lightest in the Bagaha and Shikarpur thanas, in which there is much room for further expansion. Bagaha has a density of 343 and Shikarpur of 328 persons per square mile. This scarcity of population is due to the fact that malaria is very prevalent and much of the land is still under forests. There is a considerable area of pasture available in this tract for grazing large herds of cattle and towards the north of Bagaha thana the cultivation is still very undeveloped. During the last decade the population of Shikarpur increased considerably probably owing to the improvement in the climate and consequent increased immigration to that area from other parts of the district.

Density  
of the  
population.

Perhaps the most prominent feature in the history of Champaran during the last 50 years has been the extent of the immigration. In 1881 no less than 193,659 persons were residing in the district who were born elsewhere, and in 1891 this army of immigrants had increased to 248,511 persons. The census of 1901 showed that the tide of immigration had begun to ebb and in 1911 the number of immigrants was still further reduced. The number decreased still further in 1921 and now has practically ceased. The immigrants came from Saran, Muzaffarpur, the United Provinces and Nepal.

Immigration.

The volume of emigration has been far smaller. In 1901 there were only 36,077 natives of Champaran enumerated elsewhere. The people have ample land in the district and during the last decade there was no permanent emigration. A few people mostly of the labouring class left the district temporarily, to find employment elsewhere where wages were higher.

Emigration.

The population is almost entirely rural, the only two towns being Motihari and Bettiah. The population of Motihari is 17,578 and of Bettiah 28,013. The remainder of the people live in 2,899 villages which vary considerably

Towns and  
villages.



in size. The largest is Semra Labedaha which has a population of 16,981 and the smallest is Majharia with population of 1 man.

#### LANGUAGES.

The vernacular current in the district is a dialect of Bihari Hindi called Bhojpuri, of which two main varieties are found, i.e., a border sub-dialect called Madhesi and a broken form called Tharu. Muhammadans of the upper classes again mostly talk Awadhi, a dialect of Eastern Hindi. There are, therefore, three dialects current in the district and also the gipsy dialect which is called Domra and is spoken by the criminal tribes. Tharu is the dialect of the aboriginal tribe of Tharus who inhabit the Tarai along the Nepal frontier. Awadhi literally the language of Oudh is a dialect of Eastern Hindi. Madhesi a word formed from the Sanskrit Madhyadesha meaning midland that is the land between the Maithili-speaking districts of Tirhut and the Bhojpuri speaking districts west of the Gandak is a dialect possessing some of the characteristics of both Bhojpuri and Maithili but in the main its structure is that of Bhojpuri. Speaking generally, Madhesi is the language spoken over the whole of Champaran.

#### RELIGIONS.

The great majority of the inhabitants are Hindus and next to them in number come the Muhammadans. There are besides over 3,000 Christians, some 400 animists but very few belonging to any other religion.

#### Hindus.

According to the census of 1931 there are now 1,787,274 Hindus in the district, including all castes. Out of this number only 9,343 are Brahmins. The remainder are mostly uneducated men of low caste who know little of the higher side of their religion. Popular Hinduism in Champaran is much the same as the Hinduism in other districts in Bihar. Reverence for Brahmins and the worship of the orthodox Hindu gods are universal, and the illiterate majority generally have a sort of superstitious belief in evil spirits to whom they make propitiatory offerings. These evil spirits, though not included in the orthodox Hindu pantheon, are often greatly feared, and therefore have more direct influence on the lives of the peasants, than the regular Hindu gods. One such spirit with a great local reputation is Birchha Barham, the spirit of a Brahmin who died a violent death. Birchha Barham is one of the most dreaded of all the malevolent spirits and has a famous temple in Motihari where offerings are



made through the Brahman priest. This temple, known as the Birchha Asthan, has been enlarged in recent years and is much frequented. Practices of this type do not monopolize the religious life even of the ignorant Hindus, but may be carried on, in the same village, side by side with the worship of orthodox Hindu gods.

In 1893—95 there was an outburst of Hindu religious excitement which took the form of an anti-kine killing agitation. The first movement of this kind seems to have been due to the Gorakhshini Sabhas (associations for the protection of cattle) whose legitimate object is the care of old diseased and useless cattle. There was great unrest among the villages on the border of Muzaffarpur where there were a good many Muhammadans. The fanatical feeling spread and culminated in the looting and burning of Bijai village. Additional police were quartered in that area and the excitement gradually died down.

Hindu  
religious  
movements.

The ploughmen's begging movement or Mahadeo Puja was a curious exhibition of religious feeling which occurred soon afterwards. It seems to have originated in the rumour that the god Mahadeo appeared one evening to a raiyat who was ploughing late, practically accused him of overworking his cattle and caused them to vanish. The raiyat begged him to bring them back. Mahadeo promised to do so if a penance were performed for three days, if not the same penance would be imposed for eight months. The penance consisted of resting the cattle for three days, the ploughman himself carrying round his plough and begging. With the proceeds he had to prepare three wheaten cakes one for himself, one for his cattle, and the third was buried under their stalls. The people carried out this penance for some time with scrupulous care. It is thought that this too may have been due to the Gorakhshini Sabhas.

Tree-daubing was another widespread movement. It began about the end of February 1894, in the north of Champaran not far from the Janakpur shrine which is in Nepalese territory. The movement consisted in marking trees which daubs of mud in which were stuck the hairs of different animals. This movement caused much speculation as to its origin and meaning but no definite explanation seems to have been forthcoming.



**Muham-  
madans.**

According to the last census the Muhammadans in Champaran number 354,235 persons. The great majority of these are illiterate and probably have little knowledge of the faith they profess beyond the three cardinal doctrines of the unity of God, the mission of Muhammad, and the truth of the Koran. They have certain practices not based on the Koran, the most common of which is the worship of Pirs or departed saints. These Pirs are believed to have miraculous powers and their tombs or *dargahs* often become places of pilgrimage. The most famous of these in the district is the *dargah* of Khwaja Mirza Halim at Mehsi. This shrine is visited by many and an annual fair is held there.

**Wahabis.**

The Wahabis, though Sunnis, do not follow such unorthodox practices. The Wahabi movement in this and other districts in North Bihar was inaugurated by Maulavi Nazir Hussain, a native of Monghyr, and others. The members of this sect prefer to call themselves Ahl-i-Hadis or the people of the tradition, i.e. they interpret for themselves the traditional sayings of Muhammad not embodied in the Koran, without following any particular Imam. Another name adopted by them is Ghair Mokallid, i.e. those who do not wear the collar of any Imam. The main features of their creed are that Friday prayers are a rule, the hands are raised in prayer, and the "Amen" is pronounced in a loud voice. Their influence in the district is now less than in former years.

**Christians.**

According to the last census of 1931 there are now 3,655 Christians in Champaran, of whom 2,741 are Roman Catholics—nearly all living in the Bettiah subdivision. Bettiah is the headquarters of the Prefecture Apostolic of Bettiah and Nepal which was constituted in 1892, and made over to the Capuchin Fathers, but the Catholic Mission in the district dates still further back, being the direct descendant of the great Capuchin Mission which established itself in Lhasa and Nepal during the first half of the 18th century. In 1745 Father Horace of Peuna was compelled by persecution to leave Lhasa and retired with two companions to the Mission hospice at Patan near Kathmandu, where he died. One of his two companions Father Joseph Mary (Giuseppe Maria dei Bernini) had some medical knowledge and had already attended Dharup Singh Raja of Bettiah, and cured the Rani of a serious illness; the Raja



invited him to establish a mission at Bettiah, and gave him a house to live in. In 1769 when the Capuchins were expelled from Nepal by the Gurkhas, they took refuge at Chuhari with some of their Nepalese converts. There is now a mission high English school at Bettiah and an orphanage kept by the nuns, who also give most valuable help in the Bettiah hospitals.

A protestant mission called the Regions Beyond Mission was started in Motihari in 1900 and has a branch at Chainpatia. There is also a medical mission at Raxaul and an Australian mission near Ghorasahan. The Salvation Army has a settlement for criminal tribes at Chauterwa, where weaving is taught.

The principal Muhammadan castes are the Jolahas and the Sheikhs who both belong to the Sunni sect. The Hindu castes are more numerous, the most important numerically being the Ahirs or Goalas and the Chamars. The other numerically large castes are the Kurmis, Brahmans, Koiris, Dusadhs, Rajputs, Kandus, Mallahs, Telis, Nunias and Babhans. The Goalas live almost entirely by cultivation and cattle-breeding. The Kurmis, Koiris and Dusadhs are cultivators, the latter also working as labourers. The Chamars are the village leather dressers and tanners and the Mallahs are a boating and fishing caste. The Nunias' traditional occupation is the manufacture of saltpetre, and they make the best labourers. The Telis' hereditary occupation is the manufacture and sale of oil but many of them are traders and have become wealthy *mahajans*. The Rajputs and Babhans are nearly all connected with agriculture in some form or other. The Brahmans also are largely supported by agriculture. Formerly the connection between the Maharajahs of Bettiah and Benares induced many Brahmans from Benares to settle in and about Bettiah. Many villages were let out to them at low rents and they caused many temples to be built and endowed. Among other high castes may be mentioned the Kayasthas or writer-caste. Among the low castes the Turahas are numerous.

PRINCIPAL  
CASTES.

The *Arya Samaj* movement began to attain some *Arya Samaj* importance in the district after the breach between the Hindus and Khilafatists about the year 1923. The movement rose to its height in 1927-28 owing to bitter communal feeling caused by the Bettiah riot of 1927. This riot was



caused by a *Mahabiri Dal* procession in Bettiah and resulted in the death of some 15 persons. Subsequently the *Arya Samaj* movement has lost importance though *Mahabiri* processions and meetings are growing more numerous every year. These, though originally started by the *Arya Samajists*, are no longer strictly *Arya Samajist* in character. They do, however, stir up considerable communal feeling and the danger of communal rioting is ever present during the season of these meetings and processions.

There are a few castes peculiar to the district, i.e. the Sarbhangs, Tharus, Thakurais or Gaddis and Magahiya Doms.

**Sarbhangs.**

The Sarbhangs are only a small community. They do not observe any caste restrictions and admit outsiders of all castes and religions and will take food from anyone. They worship Ramchandra and believe that the whole world being full of Ram everything is pure. They bury their dead. Some have settled down to cultivation but they are usually beggars, are said to rank with Aghoris and are despised by respectable Hindus.

**The Thakurais or Gaddis.**

The Thakurais or Gaddis are a Muhammadan community found only in Champaran. They are mostly cultivators of Hindu origin and claim to have been Rajputs before their conversion. They still observe many Hindu customs.

**Doms.**

The Magahiya Doms are a sub-caste of Doms who derive their name from the word Magah or Magadh, the old name for Bihar. They are of aboriginal descent and led a thieving and gypsy life until they were concentrated in settlements. Robbery was so much a recognized mode of life among them that it became a part of their religion, a distinct ritual being ordained for those who set forth to commit a burglary. On such occasions they worshipped Sansari Mai, whom some hold to be a form of Kali. No image is set up, but a circle one span and four fingers in diameter is drawn on the ground, and smeared smooth with cowdung. Squatting in front of this the worshipper then cuts his left arm with the curved Dom knife and with his fingers daubs five streaks of blood in the centre of the circle, praying in a low voice for a dark night to aid his designs, ample booty and a safe return.

**Tharus.**

The Tharus are an aboriginal tribe who live in the submontane Terai in the north of the district. They are



nearly all in the Bagaha and Shikarpur thanas in scattered clearings in or near the jungles. Many of them came into the district from the north and east after the rise of the Bettiah Raj, and the absorption of the petty zamindars. Their origin is not known but it seems probable that they are a Dravidian race whose ancestors formerly ruled in the valley of the Ganges and were gradually driven up into the sub-Himalayan areas. Like other inhabitants of villages on the Nepal border, their features sometime have a slightly Mongolian cast but not to any marked extent. It seems possible that they are the people mentioned by Alberuni in 1030 as living in Tilwat a country bordering on Nepal the inhabitants of which were called "Taru a people of very black colour and flat-nosed like the Turhas".

They live in grass-thatched houses, using timber instead of bamboos. They are mainly agriculturists and each village keeps very large herds of cattle and buffaloes, the former for breeding bullocks and the latter for milk. They trade in young cattle, young buffaloes and ghee, and work as carters and timber fellers. They rent land very cheaply from the Bettiah Estate and most of them have very large holdings. They are lazy and get hired labour from Gorakhpur to cut their rice crops on the bundle system of 1/8th. According to the last census there are 37,338 Tharus in the district and they are all classed as Hindus.

The houses in Champaran are much the same as those SOCIAL LIFE in other districts in North Bihar and elsewhere, that is to Houses. say the poorer people live in mud huts or houses with thatched roofs and the wealthier classes have brick houses with tiled roofs. As a rule they have very little furniture. Cattle and other livestock are generally tied up outside.

The staple food of the people is rice, but barley, maize Food. and lentils are also very generally consumed, besides peas of various kinds and sweet potatoes. Ghee and various kinds of oil are used for cooking.

In Champaran as elsewhere in India the peoples' dress Dress. varies considerably, according to their means, occupation and religion, but generally speaking the majority of the men wear *dhotis* and *gumchas* (a piece of cloth worn over the shoulder) and the women wear *saris*.

Marriage, funeral and other ceremonies remain much the Marriage same as in the last few decades. In 1907 they were as ceremonies.



follows :—When a match is contemplated the boy's *kundali* (an abstract of the *janam patra* or horoscope) is brought by a Pandit and a barber to the girl's father to be compared with her *kundali*. If there is no astrological obstacle the marriage is then arranged. A rupee and *dhoti* are sent to the boy as tokens of confirmation, a sacred thread being added if he is a Brahman or Khatri, by caste. This present is called *parcha*. The next step is the settlement of the *tilak* or dowry, the amount of which varies from a few rupees to thousands according to the means of the bride's guardian. The *tilak* is sent to the bridegroom on some auspicious day through the Pandit and the barber who receive rewards varying in value according to the means of the bridegroom's guardian.

The next ceremony is that of introduction called *lagan*. The bridegroom is dressed in a pale yellow *dhoti* and goes to the bride at her own house. They are set together. A handful of rice with some silver ornament is put into their hands, and married women touch them from the feet upward throwing some rice over their heads. Then follows the *matkar* ceremony. Earth is brought from a field and put in the court-yard; over it is placed a pitcher of water, covered with mango leaves; one pice and some sweetmeats are put inside, and rice or barley is deposited on the lid. Above this is set the marriage lamp, containing four wicks and hence called the *chaumukh*. The *matkar* is succeeded by the *mando* ceremony. A *mandwa* or *shamiana* is erected and hung with mango leaves, and the beam of a plough is set up hard by. Beneath the *shamiana* is placed an earthen elephant, three to seven holes are dug near the plough beam, and an image of Ganesh is made of cowdung and worshipped. The bride or the bridegroom sits near it and is painted with *haldi* by the near relatives. The ceremony is called *haldi charhana* and continues till the marriage day. But the preliminary ceremonies do not end even here. On an auspicious day fixed by the Brahman, *manki puja* is observed. This is the worship of all the family gods conducted by the Pandit in conjunction with the bride's guardian. The lowest cost to the bride's guardian of this ceremony is Re. 1-4-0 and it may rise to Rs. 1,125. The raiyat spends about Rs. 50.

At length, the day for the *barat* or marriage procession arrives. The bridegroom is carried with much display to



the bride's house, and on arrival is honoured by the bride's guardian. A garland is thrown round his neck and a *tika* or mark of curd and rice is put on his forehead, while some *achhar* or *mantra* is recited over him. At the same time, he is given a present, the value of which varies from Re. 1-4-0 to Rs. 125, according to the means of the bride's guardian. This ceremony is called the *duar puja*. On its completion, the *barat* retires for a rest and refreshments. Then there is a *shashtratha* (a competition in reciting Shashtras) between Brahman guests and *bahas* (discussion) between the Kayasth guests of either party. When finished, the bride's guests retire from the presence of the *baratis*.

The next function is the presentation of presents to the bride, consisting usually of gold and silver ornaments, dresses and sweetmeats. The bridegroom's elder brother, accompanied by other relations, takes the presents to the *shamiana* and places them in the outstretched hands of the bride, who is brought there for the purpose by the barber's wife. This done, the men retire. The bridegroom is then brought into the *shamiana* wearing a *dhoti* and is seated by the side of the wife's guardian. The Pandit now recites the *mantra* consecrating the marriage and the guardian bestows the hand of the bride on the bridegroom. This final ceremony is called *kanyadan*. The bridegroom's party is then given a big feast which often costs more than the means of the bride's guardian allow. A few years later, when the bride is of mature age, she for the first time goes to the house of her husband. The technical term for this is *gauna*, but no particular ceremony is observed. Force of custom, however, compels her guardian to give her a dowry or ornaments, furniture, cattle and dress, the cost of which he often can very ill-afford.

When a Hindu is at the point of death his family, if rich, give a calf and, if poor, some pice to the Brahman and certain passages are read out from the Vedas. The dead body is covered with new cloth and borne to the burning ground on a bed or a bamboo *ranthi*. The heir puts the fire into the mouth. When the corpse is reduced to ashes, the mourners retire to the deceased's house, and are fed with plain rice, *urid* pulse, and cow's milk. A pitcher filled with water, and having a small hole in the bottom is hung from a *pipal* tree, the idea being that the departed soul of the deceased can drink, if so disposed. For ten days thereafter

Funeral ceremonies.



food (*pinda*) is placed near a river bank as an offering to the deceased. All the relatives assemble on the tenth day, called *daswan* and are shaven. *Pinda* is again offered on the eleventh day and Mahapatra Brahmins are fed in accordance with the means of the family. A calf is then branded and let loose. The Brahman gets a gift of all the personal effects of the deceased, new clothing, bedding and some brass utensils. The Mahapatras avail themselves of this opportunity to squeeze out of the family as much as they can by refusing to eat unless they are amply paid. On the twelfth day the Purohit Brahmins are fed, and they get as charity 1 pice to 2 annas each. Finally, on the following day the relatives of the deceased are entertained to dinner.

The dead body of a Muhammadan is bathed with water in which a little camphor has been dissolved and is then clothed in the *kaffan*; after this, it is borne to the burial ground, where the funeral prayer (*nimaz*) is said and the body is interred. Some silver or copper is distributed to beggars. The services of a Hafiz are secured to recite the Koran every day on the spot where the deceased breathed his last. This continues for 40 days. On the third or fourth day after the death, the relatives and friends of the family assemble and read the Koran. This ceremony, which is called *hal*, is again observed on the twentieth and fortieth days. On each occasion food and pice are distributed to the beggars. Well-to-do men give a dinner on each of these three days, but those of humbler condition are content with one on the last, i.e. the fortieth day, when the closing ceremony called *Chehlum* takes place. The Hafiz gets all the personal effects of the deceased, some copper utensils and some money. Beggars also get clothing on this day, if the family can afford it.

Before sowing a Pandit is consulted for an auspicious hour. On being served with *prota* (a dole of rice, some *haldi* (turmeric) and one to four annas in pice) the Pandit unfolds his *patra* and proceeds to study the stars. After fixing the time, he selects a male member of the family whose horoscope is favourable, and at the appointed hour the man chosen proceeds to the field with a *kodali* on his shoulder and a *lota* of water in the right hand. Digging for five steps each way in the middle of the field, he scatters seed and pours out the hallowed water from his *lota* there. This preliminary ceremony is technically called *muth lagana*.



The crops, when ready, are cut on a day again named by the Pandit, for which he gets another *purota*. They are harvested and brought to the threshing floor, where a mango or *dhip* post is set up in the centre, after a few nuts (*kasaili*) and some pice have been placed in the hole made for the purpose. To this post the bullocks that tread out the grain are fastened. During the subsequent process of husking, any grain that falls outside the basket is jealously guarded and reserved for the consumption solely of the members of the family; this is called *agwar*. After the *agwar* has been gathered up the grain has to be weighed, but before the actual weighment begins, a religious ceremony takes place. A fire is ignited on the spot; some ghee, linseed, *dhup* wood and rice are mixed, and poured over it. A *mantra* is meanwhile recited by the priest, who again comes in for a gratuity, generally of a *paseri* of rice and 4 annas with some *haldi*. The heap is then smoothed, and a ball of cowdung is placed in the centre of the heap, as an emblem of good luck. Three *sup*s of grain are next taken out, one set apart for Brahmans, another distributed to beggars and the third reserved for the *gorait*. A *sup* usually contains a *paseri* of grain. Finally, the grain is brought home and stored without any further ceremony.

The foodstuffs grown in the district are much in excess of the needs of the people, but the economic condition is not good as they are generally in debt to the local *mahajan* or money-lender. This is chiefly due to their heavy expenditure in litigation and marriage and funeral ceremonies.



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CHAMPARAN.

CHAPTER IV.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

PUBLIC  
HEALTH.

At one time the rainfall in Champaran was heavier than in any other district in Bihar, and the humidity of the atmosphere, the nearness of the hills and the numerous stagnant lakes combined to make the climate one of the most unhealthy in the province. This is no longer true of the greater part of the district, but in the submontane tract in the north, the climate is distinctly unhealthy during the rainy season and probably at that time, in that particular area, malaria is more prevalent than in other parts of the province. Otherwise the district is comparatively healthy, and the physique of the inhabitants is not noticeably below that of the inhabitants of Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga districts.

VITAL  
STATISTICS.

In 1907 the average birth-rate for the preceding five years 1902—1906 inclusive was reported to be 41.98 per mille. The average birth-rate for the last five years 1926 to 1930 inclusive is 37.00 per mille. In 1907 it is recorded that the highest death-rate returned was in the year 1894 when the mortality was 43.22 per mille and the lowest death-rate 23.04 per mille in the year 1891. The average death-rate for the last five years is 25.54 per mille.

PRINCIPAL  
DISEASES.

Fever.

The greatest mortality is caused by fever which up to 1907 had never been known to cause a death-rate of less than 17 per mille since the introduction of the present system of mortuary returns. The average death-rate from fever for the past five years is 17.82 per mille. It should be noted that these statistics for fever include influenza and other diseases with feverish symptoms, but by far the greater number of fevers recorded are malarial. There are various types of malaria but most of them are of the benign type which yields to quinine. During the fever season quinine is supplied free to certain schools in the district, also, the sale of quinine treatment at various post offices has been in force for many years. During the last few years the epidemic doctors when available have treated fever cases in some parts



of the district where there are no dispensaries and in the villages most affected the district board distributed quinine tablets free of charge.

Next to fever the greatest mortality due to any specific **Cholera**, disease is caused by cholera. In 1907 it is stated that the worst epidemic on record occurred in the years 1894, 1900 and 1903 when the disease caused a mortality of 8.25, 11.74 and 7.60 per mille, respectively. The average mortality for the last five years is 2.91 per mille. This includes a bad epidemic in 1930 when the mortality was 7.89 per mille. During this epidemic over 15,000 people died of cholera chiefly in Bettiah, Shikarpur, Dhaka, Kessariya, Adapur and Madhuban thanas. The epidemic was especially severe from April to August in spite of the steps taken to combat it—such as disinfection of wells, cholera inoculation (which proved very successful and became popular) and the appointment of a special medical staff.

Small-pox now rarely occurs in epidemic form and the **Small-pox**, average mortality for the last five years is 0.35 per mille. This decrease is largely due to vaccination.

Plague is not at all prevalent in the district and in 1930 **Plague**, there were no deaths from plague.

The other most common diseases in the district are **Other** diarrhoea, dysentery, tuberculosis of the lungs and Kala-Azar, **diseases**. Leprosy and goitre also are fairly common, the latter being especially bad near the Dhanauti river.

There are four large hospitals in the district at Motihari **Medical** and Bettiah, i.e., the Motihari Sadr and Motihari police **institutions**, hospitals and the Bettiah K. E. M. and Bettiah Raj Dufferin hospitals and twenty-one dispensaries in the various thanas throughout the district.

A medical mission has recently been established in Raxaul and is building a dispensary there.

In former years the people generally favoured native **Ayurvedic** physicians rather than the European methods of treatment. **and Tibbi** **institutions**. *Hakims* and *vaidyas* were numerous, the former treating patients according to the Persian system while the latter adopted the Hindu mode of treatment. In recent years owing



to the increase in dispensaries besides the four large hospitals mentioned above, the number of *hakims* and *vaidyas* have greatly decreased and their methods of treatment have largely been replaced by European methods.

The district board, however, in 1928 opened three Ayurvedic dispensaries at Ramgarhwa, Areraj and Lakhaura and one Tibbi dispensary at Mainatand. These institutions, are purely charitable ones, run at the expense of the district board at an annual cost of Rs. 4,000, but have hitherto been unable to gain very much popularity.



## AGRICULTURE.

### CHAPTER V.

#### AGRICULTURE.

LIKE most other districts in the plains of the Ganges, the greater part of Champaran is a flat cultivated expanse but there are large tracts of hill and jungle in the north and west. According to Mr. Sweeney's Settlement Report, dated 1913—19 out of the total area 2,077,735 of the district 1,429,859 acres or 69 per cent are cultivated while 647,875 acres or 31 per cent are uncultivated. The figures do not include the 290 square miles of hill and jungle in the north of the district which have not been cadastrally surveyed. It is interesting to note as stated in 1907 that in the time of Akbar not even one-twentieth of the district came under assessment, the area assessed by Todar Mal in 1582 being only 155 square miles. Within the next two centuries, there was great progress and by 1790 the assessed area had grown to 1,041 square miles. From the time of the permanent settlement up to the revenue survey of 1845 the progress of agricultural development was very rapid, but since that time it has proceeded more slowly. In 1874 it was estimated that 67 per cent of the district was cultivated and in 1907 the estimate was 70 per cent as against 69 per cent given above from the last settlement report. The explanation given for this temporary decrease in the area of cultivation is simple enough. On the one hand since the previous settlement over 8,000 acres of cultivated land has been acquired for railways and canals and has thus become waste. On the other hand natural development was arrested by the famine of 1897 and its consequent depression and later by a long period of agrarian trouble. There had been additional causes such as disappointing immigration due to the threatening agrarian outlook, the evil reputation of the climate in the thanas where there was more room for expansion and the lightness of the soil in some of the central thanas. At the present time the agrarian trouble has ended in effect as far as cultivation is concerned and the population of the district has largely increased. In the absence of an up-to-date settlement report it is difficult to estimate the



exact area under cultivation. The Bettiah Estate has taken over the large indigo concerns, and there has been no difficulty in settling the land with raiyats. On the contrary in most places there was great competition for the holdings. Also owing to the agitation about the insufficiency of grazing lands the Bettiah Estate has found it necessary to reserve exercise ground for village cattle. These facts show that in recent years the pressure on the land has increased.

#### Soil.

The Gandak bounds the district on the west and there is an alluvial tract of great natural fertility in the vicinity of its course. The most important river is the Sikrana which flows in a south-easterly direction through the centre of the district and divides it into two distinct parts. North of the Sikrana the soil is mainly clay, locally called *bangar*, which is particularly good for winter rice and is suited to irrigation. In this northern tract a thin reddish loam called *babhni* is also found, which will not grow rice but bears crops of maize, barley, gram, etc. The least fertile soil is *baldhus*, a light loose sandy soil, suitable only for maize and inferior millets. South of the Sikrana uplands called *bhith* predominate, and the soil is generally a light loam suitable for millets, cereals, oil-seeds and indigo. *Dhobini*, *goenra*, *bhath* and *baldhus* are also different kinds of upland soil. *Dhobini* meaning bleached corresponds to *babhni* in the northern tract. *Goenra* is the upland soil close to village sites which is especially manured by cowdung and is consequently very fertile. *Bhath* is a name given to land periodically visited by floods enriched by a deposit of silt. Sugarcane and root crops such as jams, potatoes grow abundantly on it. There are also large marshes (*chaurs*) where rice is grown, and *dub* which are low sandy lands on the riverside which stagnant flood water converts into marsh. In these a kind of coarse paddy, *boro dhan*, is grown.

#### Protection of cultivation.

Although Champaran is by no means immune from damage by floods, a successful attempt has been made to confine the Gandak by an embankment some 83 miles long extending down the western border of the district and protecting an area estimated at 2,693 square miles.

At various times retired lines have been constructed the last of which the Dumarea retired line was taken in hand in 1924 and completed in 1925 with the exception of a portion



on high ground, which owing to a change in the course of the river is in no danger of inundation.

The north and east of the district contain a large proportion of *bangar* soil which, as already stated, grows winter rice, and is peculiarly suited to irrigation. It is in this area that the canals operate and it may be said that with the irrigation facilities now existing the district is practically immune from famine on an extensive scale. The irrigation systems operate in the summer months, and are designed mainly to protect the rice crops. There are now three main canals as follows :—

“ 1. The Tribeni canal, which traverses the whole north of the district from Tribeni ghat to Mainatand. This canal obtains its water-supply from the river Gandak at the point where it enters the district, and has its head sluice at Bhaissalotan near the village of Tribeni, from which it derives its name. It is 62 miles long and the first portion was opened on June 7th, 1909. Since that time the extension of the irrigation has gone on continuously in a series of lengthy distributaries running south. The canal, cutting as it does across all the numerous torrents which flow from the Nepal hills south, i.e. across the whole waterway of the district, is an ambitious project, which has been subject to considerable expense in upkeep. In several floods the main canal has been breached in many places which has resulted in stopping irrigation until the breaches were repaired at considerable cost. In some years silting up at the head works has rendered it very difficult to obtain a sufficient head of water during the season when irrigation is most needed : in other years irrigation has been difficult owing to silting up of the main canal and distributaries. Owing to these difficulties the canal has not entirely succeeded in replacing the older system of irrigation by bunding the mountain streams, which will be referred to later. These bunds are in most cases unauthorized and cause complications from the administrative point of view. In spite of these difficulties the Tribeni canal has been of great value to the area concerned. It would probably be of greater value still if a system could be worked out for combining irrigation from the canal with irrigation worked on the older system.

“ 2. The Tiur canal takes off from the Tiur river and runs almost due south from Chauradano to Lakhaura. This canal, which was completed in 1879, was constructed mainly at the expense of Rai Bahadur Durga Prasad Singh, the Madhuban



Babu and of other zamindars. The total cost was Rs. 72,926, of which Government paid Rs. 6,881. It was taken over by Government in 1886 and has been maintained since that time from provincial revenues. It traverses what is perhaps the most fertile tract in the district and is a great success. The area irrigated is approximately 6,000 acres.

Dhaka  
canal.

" 3. The Dhaka canal runs south and west from the vicinity of Bairagnia station and was designed to carry off the water of the Lal Bakya river to the south of Dhaka thana. The construction of the canal was begun in 1896-97 as a famine relief work and was completed in March 1908. The area irrigated by the canal is approximately 16,000 acres. It works extremely well and insures good crops."

Pynes.

In addition to these three canals irrigation in the north of the district is obtained by bunding the rivers, the water being generally distributed by means of pynes. The most noteworthy system of pynes is that laid down by the Sathi concern. It is stated that in 1907 there were then nearly 150 miles of distributaries running through the property. The rivers drawn from were the Pandai, Maniari, Kataha and Ramrekha. The proprietors of Sathi concern gave their own raiyats the use of water and also allowed the same privilege to the cultivators of other villages after their own tenants had been supplied. Any surplus water was run into village tanks for the benefit of the villagers and their cattle. It was estimated in 1906-07 that about 20,000 acres were irrigated from this source. Much of this system was replaced by the Tribeni canal but part of it still operates successfully based on the bunding of the Pandai river. In the area north and south of the Tribeni canal the system of bunding rivers for irrigation purposes prevails to some extent, particularly in years of short rainfall. The majority of these bunds have not been authorized and consequently cause frequent disputes. The system of irrigation is not properly organized, and it is one of the problems of the district which has never been really solved. The problem is more difficult as many of these bunds and pynes are relics of the old system of irrigation which was carried on before the Tribeni canal was built, and therefore in some cases there is a certain amount of right attached to them. Irrigation is also done from tanks and wells.

PRINCIPAL  
CROPS.

In Champaran, as elsewhere in Bihar, the crops are grouped in three great divisions—*aghañi*, *bhadai* and *rabi*.



The principal *aghami* crops are the winter rice crop and sugarcane—the former being cut in the month of *Aghan* (November—December). The principal *bhadai* crops are early rice, maize, various millets, and formerly indigo. And the principal *rabi* crops are wheat, barley and *rahar*. Taking the district as a whole the most important crops are rice, maize, sugarcane, wheat, and barley. Rice occupying 85,786,354 acres is the all-important crop in Champaran. Of this total area 34,286,856 acres are under *bhadai* and 51,499,498 under *aghami*. The largest rice-growing tract is comprised within the Adapur, Shikarpur, Dhaka, Bagaha and Bettiah thanas. Of these, Shikarpur heads the list with an area of 20,425,046 acres out of a net-cropped area of 24,071,765 acres. In the Tarai tract to the north of the district rice is almost the only crop grown by the aboriginal *tharus*. There are several rice-mills in the district.

The area under sugarcane has increased considerably in the last thirty years. In the settlement report of 1892—99 the area shown is something over 11,000 acres. At the time of the last settlement the area was 19,687 acres. Last year (1930) the area was approximately 21,100 acres. Many of the indigo concerns in the district were originally started as sugar factories but the manufacture of sugar was given up when indigo proved to be more profitable. Now the reverse process has taken place. This is largely due to the drop in the price of indigo, but it is also due to the fact that the price of sugarcane is fixed and has remained stable for a number of years. This is the more remarkable in the present economic crisis when the prices of rice and other grains have fallen to pre-war rates. A number of new sugar mills are now being erected in the district, and it is probable that the area under sugar will again increase considerably. Sugarcane is planted and cut in the cold weather months. The cultivation of sugarcane has been materially assisted by the work done at the Sugar Bureau at Pusa and the distribution of the Co. varieties to the large growers of the district. The industry has also been considerably helped by the present policy of the Government of India which has given it protection by means of heavy import duties.

Indigo, which was formerly one of the chief crops in the district, is not grown now, as the industry has died out. Lalsariah concern, which is the last factory to grow and



manufacture indigo, has probably done so for the last time this year (1931).

**Maize.** Next to rice maize is the most important staple food-crop in the district. It is a *bhadai* crop, being harvested about September. The area under maize at the time of the last settlement was 159,984 acres. It is grown very extensively in the south as it is suited to the upland soil. It usually keeps the raiyat going for at least four months in the year.

**Barley.** Barley is the third most important food-crop in the district. It is a *rabi* crop, and is harvested in March or early April, and grown on the uplands in succession to maize. At the time of the last settlement the area under barley was 167,335 acres. Speaking generally the Champaran cultivator does very little cultivation for *rabi* crops and therefore as a rule the outturn is small and the quality poor. Barley *sattu* (flour) is very good.

The area under wheat at the time of the last settlement was 107,182 acres. It is a valuable food-crop, but is generally grown for sale. Bearded wheat is the kind grown, and the quality is poor. In 1907 it was stated that wheat is so highly esteemed that it is called "Devanna" or the food of the gods.

**Arhar.** *Arhar* or *rahar* (lentil) is another very useful food-crop. Its feeding value is high. It does not require irrigation, grows on light soil and will flourish in time of draught when other crops are parched and dying. The area under this crop at the time of the last settlement was 66,457 acres.

**Haldi.** At the time of the last settlement the area under *haldi* was 113,780 acres, but at the present time it is probably considerably less. *Haldi* is often grown with other crops such as the castor-oil plant.

**Other food-crops.** Other food-crops grown in small quantities are gram, linseed, oats, sweet potatoes, peas, *masuri* and *chura*, millet, etc. It was stated in 1907 that the last-named crop attracted a good deal of attention during the famine of 1897 as it can be raised in a shorter time than any other crop, six weeks only being required for its growth. Chillies are very little grown in Champaran.

**Other non-food-crops.** Other non-food-crops grown in the district are different varieties of oil-seeds and *kharhaul* or thatching grass and jute,



etc. Thatching grass is a most useful crop as it grows naturally on land which is left fallow for some years. There are very large stretches of it in some parts of the district particularly in the north. Jute was fairly extensively grown during the greater part of the period when the price of jute was high and collecting agencies were established in the district, but during the last year or two the price of jute has dropped considerably and there is now very little grown in the district, which climatically is not really suited to its cultivation.

On the whole, the Champaran villagers are indifferent cultivators. Their methods are backward and frequently through slackness or indifference they do very little cultivation. This, of course, does not apply to large tracts of rice which does not require much cultivation. This is probably largely due to the fact that the holdings are larger than in the more populous areas in other districts of Bihar.

The principal fruit of Champaran is the mango. At the time of the last settlement there were about 41,540 acres of mango groves. It was stated in 1907 that the Maharajas of Bettiah had always shown a keen interest in the planting of mango trees which according to the Hindu creed is an act of religious merit, and their example has been followed by their servants and tenantry.

*Bananas* and *lichis* are also extensively grown and limes, peaches, guavas, papayas, custard-apples, *bel* and jack-fruit in smaller quantities.

The chief vegetables are potatoes, sweet-potatoes (*alua*), onions, pumpkins, melons and cauliflowers.

It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of cattle-breeding to the cultivators. The plough cattle are bred locally and in addition there has been for years a large sale of bullocks for export to other parts of India especially Bengal.

In the cattle census of 1930 the figures recorded were 808 bulls (this figure is inaccurate as many Brahmani bulls evade enumeration), 382,614 bullocks, 370,581 cows and 226,417 young stock, 11,826 buffalo-bulls, 124,280 cow-buffaloes and 88,983 young stock, that is a total of 1,205,509.

There are many fine and well-conditioned bullocks to be seen about the district chiefly cart-bullocks, but the large



herds of cows and calves are generally in extremely bad condition—undersized and half-starved. This is due to indiscriminate over-breeding and also the fact that insufficient ground is kept for grazing and there are very few fodder crops grown. There is no reason or excuse for this state of affairs as fodder crops such as guinea-grass can be grown in mango and other groves at an almost negligible cost. *Janera* is the only real fodder crop grown, but rice, wheat and barley straw are also used for fodder. In most villages buffalo-cows are used for milking more than cows. Buffaloes are not used as draught animals. Goats are numerous everywhere in the district, 577,618 being recorded in 1930. They are a small type but are generally in fairly good condition. They are not generally milked. There are veterinary hospitals at Motihari, Bettiah and Bagaha and Veterinary Assistant Surgeons tour in the district. The Veterinary Department has popularized vaccination for epidemic diseases, which has done a great deal of good. A district branch of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has recently been formed.

**Agricultural  
institutions.**

The only adequate agricultural institution in the district is the Bettiah farm at Byreah. The main object of the farm is to teach the raiyats better methods of cultivation and to supply them with pure seeds of improved varieties of crops tested thoroughly on the farm. For these purposes plots of land by the main roads belonging to zamindars or raiyats are used for demonstration, the cultivation being supervised by the Manager and his staff. The cultivation of fodder crops has been inaugurated and seeds are being distributed throughout the district. Also cheap improved implements such as ploughs, cultivators, ridge ploughs and harrows, are sold at the farm and are used there and on the demonstration plots. The Bettiah Estate also maintains a small buffalo-breeding farm at Bettiah and a seed farm at Pipra and stations good buffalo-bulls at villages throughout the estate.

As regards agriculture the chief needs of the district are better methods of cultivation, the use of fodder crops and the elimination of useless cattle, also the better storage and use of manures and the spread of seeds of improved varieties.



# BIHAR & ORISSA

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## NATURAL CALAMITIES.

## CHAPTER VI.

## NATURAL CALAMITIES.

CHAMPARAN was previously particularly liable to the visitations of famine owing to its dependence on the rice crop and the absence of irrigation. A generally deficient monsoon is more disastrous to rice than any other crop for the prospects of the early rice are seriously prejudiced by a scanty rainfall at its beginning, while a premature termination is fatal to the winter crop. If there is a total failure of both these crops, the people have nothing to subsist on until the harvesting of the *rabi* crops in the latter part of March, except maize and inferior millet crops such as *kodo* and *sawan*. In dry years the *rabi* crops largely fail. LIABILITY TO FAMINE.

Failure of the rains bears particularly hardly on the Champaran raiyats, for as they inhabit a district in which copious rain is in normal years a certainty, where land is comparatively plentiful, and rents are low, they have not acquired the resource, energy, and adaptability which are the attributes of their fellows in the more thickly-populated areas of Tirhut: Also they suffer more heavily from malaria and kindred diseases.

Champaran was visited by famine in 1866, 1874 and in 1897 and by scarcity in 1889. FAMINES.

In 1865 the rainfall was deficient and stopped early, none falling in October, with the result that the winter rice was almost a total failure. The previous autumn crops had been fair, but had been largely exported owing to the prevalence of high prices in the neighbouring districts; and consequently, when the rice crop was lost, distress became general. As early as October 1865, the commonest kind of rice could not be procured at less than 9 seers a rupee—three times the rate at which it was sold at the beginning of the same year, and the price of all other food-grains had risen in a similar proportion. The *rabi* crops were also poor owing to want of moisture, and *china*, a grain which is largely grown in the early summer, withered completely. FAMINE OF 1866.



FAMINE OF  
1874.

No relief measures were undertaken till June, when road works were started and relief-centres established at Motihari and Bettiah for the distribution of gratuitous relief in the shape of one daily meal of soaked grain. No system seems, however, to have regulated the distribution of food, the quantity which each applicant obtained depending on the numbers present; thus at Motihari the sum allotted for relief was so small that each applicant out of 1,500 received only four chittacks or half a pound of food per diem. To add to the general distress, the main embankment on the Gandak gave way in August, and the flood-water passing over the district till it joined the Little Gandak swept away the crops over a large area. The maize harvest, however, was good; prices fell in September and all relief centres were closed by the 1st October. In the meantime, the mortality from actual starvation and disease, accelerated by want of food, was very great; the total number of deaths reported being no less than 56,000 or 6 per cent, on an estimated population of 850,000.

In Champaran, as in other Bihar districts, the year 1871 was marked by excessive rainfall, the excess varying from 12 inches in the Bettiah to 18.50 inches in the headquarters subdivision. This surplus rain fell chiefly in September and was followed by inundations, which caused great damage to the bulk of the autumn crops. The alluvial deposits brought down by the floods seem, however, to have benefited both the rice and the spring crops and the outturn of these harvests was satisfactory. The year 1872 was, on the whole, favourable from an agricultural point of view and were it not that in March 1873, violent hail-storms in the north of the district caused serious injury to the spring crops in isolated tracts of country, the harvests would have been decidedly good. As things happened, it may be said that the year preceding the year of failure was a fairly prosperous year, neither above the average nor below it—and during the latter part of 1872 and in the early part of 1873 the grain market recovered in a great measure its normal tone.

The rains of 1873 were deficient all over the district, the deficiency being much more marked in the Bettiah subdivision than in Motihari. During June, July and August, i.e. the months in which the autumn crop is sown and matures, the rainfall in the headquarters subdivision was somewhat in excess while in the Bettiah subdivision it fell short of the



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normal quantity. The *bhadai* crops suffered much from this capriciousness in the rainfall, and in particular maize, which is more largely grown than any other *bhadai* crop except autumn rice, not more than five-eighths of an average crop being harvested. In September the rain practically ceased only a third of an inch falling in the whole month and this entailed the almost complete destruction of the winter rice crop. By the middle of January rice was quoted in Bagaha at 9 seers a rupee, and as the shopkeepers refused to sell even at that price, sales of Government rice were authorized.

Rain fell in the beginning of the next month and immensely improved the prospects of the spring crops. In the meantime, arrangements had been made for opening relief works and for importing over 1,000,000 maunds of grain. Incendiarism, robberies and other crimes prevalent in times of scarcity were becoming rife along the northern borders. In February Government relief was fairly established, relief works in the shape of tank-digging and road-making were opened, and the extension of the Gandak embankment was taken in hand. Early in June the rivers rose in the north of the district and flooded about 200 square miles, destroying all the Indian corn in the thanas of Motihari and Dhaka. The autumn crops, however, were fair, the outturn in the north-west and the centre of the district being exceptionally large, while in the east the yield was equal to the average. In the beginning of September, favourable accounts were received from all parts of the district except the east of Gobindgunj, where half of the late rice was said to have been totally lost. Before the end of that month, however, from 12 to 15 inches of rain had fallen, ensuring the winter harvest and spring sowings everywhere; and relief operations were closed at the end of September.

In the relief of this famine Government distributed 1,190 tons of rice in charitable relief, sold 11,081 tons for cash, paid away 7,294 tons as wages on relief works, and advanced 8,012 on recoverable loans. It also distributed Rs. 36,950 in charity, paid Rs. 6,43,808 as wages on relief works and advanced Rs. 3,00,430 in loans. During January 11,631 persons were daily employed on relief works; in February 25,361; in March 52,758; in April 83,917; in May 159,668; in June 79,752; in July 73,007; in August 8,938; and in September 1,849.



SCARCITY OF  
1889.

Owing to the deficiency of the rainfall in 1888 and the consequent injury to the winter rice crop, there was scarcity in 1889 in the north of the district, in a tract of country forming the Dhaka thana and parts of the Motihari thana and Madhuban outpost. Relief operations were commenced in December and distress became acute in March owing to the partial loss of the *rabi* harvest. Relief works were closed at the end of June owing to the fall of abundant rain, which ensured full employment for the people on agricultural labour. The unusually heavy rain which fell in the latter part of July caused floods, and thus added to the sufferings of the poorer classes, about 2,000 of whom were in receipt of gratuitous relief during the months from July to September. The average daily attendance on relief works was greatest in May, when it aggregated 11,000.

FAMINE OF  
1897.

The greatest famine of the century occurred 8 years later and was caused by deficient and unfavourably distributed rainfall in 1895 and 1896, the effects of which were intensified by extraordinarily high prices consequent on famine prevailing over a great part of India. Although the rainfall of 1895-96 was above the normal it was badly distributed. It was, on the whole, favourable for the crops until August, but it ceased prematurely none falling after the 21st September, not even in the *hathiya* asterism, when good rain is considered essential for the *aghani* rice crop and for providing moisture for the *rabi* and indigo crops. There was, moreover, practically no rain at all throughout the cold weather, the total fall from October to March inclusive amounting to only half an inch.

This was unfortunately followed by much more unfavourable conditions during 1896-97. In May 1896 the showers which facilitate the early sowings of the *bhadai* crops were much scantier than usual, and the monsoon rains began late, not breaking till the 25th June and then only feebly, the fall for June being less than half the average. The rainfall was capriciously distributed in different localities and remained in persistent defect throughout the rainy season, being 75 per cent below the normal in September; while not a drop fell after the 18th of that month until Christmas, with the exception of a shower on the 23rd November. There was a prolonged break of four weeks' duration from the 21st July to the 17th August, which did the greatest possible damage to the *aghani* rice and the *bhadai*



crops, and after the 1st September there was practically no rain at all that could be of any material benefit to the *aghani* rice crop. The total defect from May to October inclusive was 19.2 inches, or 40 per cent. Throughout the cold weather of 1896-97 occasional light showers fell, but in February there was a defect of 66 per cent.

The result was a very inferior *bhadai* crop and an almost total failure of the winter rice, the outturn being only 8 and  $5\frac{1}{2}$  annas, respectively. These two crops account for nearly three-fourths of the harvests of the district; and as the outturn of the *rabi* was only 12 annas, the distress in Champaran was more general and widespread than in any other district of the division except Darbhanga. Moreover, Champaran shared in the general rise of prices, and felt it the more acutely because in ordinary years it produces more than it needs, and exports its produce largely to Saran and elsewhere: consequently its dealers, and its population generally, had to submit to a complete change of normal conditions, from easy prices to famine rates and from large exportations to the importation of food for actual subsistence.

In these circumstances, during the months of greatest distress the whole district was severely affected, except four tracts, all of which owed their comparative prosperity to irrigation, viz. (1) thana Adapur on the northern boundary of the district where the streams issuing from the hills were dammed, (2) a tract round Sathi factory in Bettiah, which was irrigated from a channel from one of these streams, (3) a tract round Bettiah watered from the Sikrahna, and (4) a smaller patch in Dhaka thana protected by the Tiur canal. Two main areas in the district were always worse than the remainder, and in one of them works remained open when they had been closed in all other parts of the division. The first was a tract corresponding roughly to the Dhaka thana, where the failure of the rains was more complete than elsewhere, and where rice is the principal crop. The second was a large tract to the north-west of Bettiah, of which Ramnagar was the centre, and which included the thanas of Bagaha and Shikarpur. Here many causes combined to render distress severe and the relief of it difficult; the climate is unhealthy, the population scanty, the soil poor; the cultivators are inert, ignorant and unthrifty; there is little *bhadai* and less *rabi*, and the prosperity of the whole tract



depends on its rice crop, which in 1896 was an almost total failure. When a plentiful *bhadai* crop restored prosperity to the rest of Champaran in August 1897, the Ramnagar tract remained unrelieved, first because it has little or no *bhadai*, secondly because up to a very late date the rainfall there was much in deficit, and thirdly, because from its climate and its northerly position the crops in this area are always from a fortnight to three weeks later than they are in the south of the district.

The following account of the course of the famine is quoted with some slight abbreviation, from the final report of the Collector, Mr. D. J. Maephereson, C.I.E. :—

“ Although the whole of the Champaran district was at one time affected by famine, the duration and degree of distress varied considerably in different parts of it. The failure of the crops was not very serious in the portion of the district comprising the Dhanaha outpost lying to the west of the Gandak river nor in the vicinity of that river in most of its course where it forms the boundary of the district; nor along the north of the eastern half of the district marching with Nepal, where much was done to save the rice crop and provide moisture for sowing the spring crops by damming the small streams that come down from that country. Serious distress was likewise staved off by similar means in the broken jungle tracts skirting the foot of the hills in the north of Bettiah subdivision: these are inhabited by a race of aborigines of Mongolian type, called Tharus who are good husbandmen. In a limited area in the north-eastern portion of Dhaka thana also a considerable area of winter rice was saved, and of spring crops sown, with the aid of water taken from the Lal Bakya river across which a temporary dam was thrown by the exertions of the people interested.

“ Generally speaking in those portions of the district in which a fair *bhadai* harvest was gathered or irrigation was available, the distress was never acute. But even throughout the more favoured areas all classes of the population, except the more substantial cultivators, who managed to raise sufficient food for their own consumption, suffered, in common with the rest of the district, from the unprecedentedly high level which prices reached early in the season and maintained almost throughout the whole 12 months. And in the tracts which were saved for the most part by



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Irrigation there were always certain villages and cultivators' holdings which this benefit failed to reach. Every portion of the district had thus to be embraced in the organization for relief.

“ The most severely-affected area was the Ramnagar tract in Hardi (now Shikarpur) thana in the north of the Bettiah subdivision, where both the early and late rice, practically the only crop it yields, failed completely. Here relief measures began earlier and ended later than anywhere else lasting altogether for 11 months from the 8th of November 1896 to the 8th of October 1897. The tract first affected there covered an area of about 445 square miles with a population of 163,000. Almost simultaneously two other rice areas began to suffer severely, one in the south of Gobindgunj and the other in the south of Dhaka thana. By the middle of December, as the *bhadai* grain began to get exhausted, the distress had extended to considerable tracts which were not largely rice-producing; and by the close of that month not only was the greater part of Bagaha and Hardi (now Shikarpur) thanas affected, but also a large tract extending from Bettiah down the southern part of the district in Bettiah and Gobindgunj thanas and the northern part of Kessariya; while a great part of the eastern portion of the district was also suffering severely. During January and February the famine-stricken area widened somewhat in the neighbourhood of these tracts, and by the middle of March it extended over 1,865 square miles of country with a population of about 1,134,000. At the same time there was much distress occasioned by the general pressure of very high prices and hard times in an area of about 728 square miles, with a population of about 420,000 classed as ‘slightly affected’.

“ The middle of March marked the end of the first stage of the famine, the period during which the necessity for relief gradually extended, in the absence of employment for the people, until the commencement of the spring harvest. After this, the cultivators who had *rabi* crops began to be able for a time to fall back again on their own resources and the attendance at relief works decreased until the middle of April. This period of about six weeks may be regarded as forming the second stage of the famine.

“ During May the severity of the distress again deepened, and the area severely affected extended. By the latter part



of that month the whole of the district had become affected, as one stratum of the population after another came to an end of their resources; and the severely affected area extended to 2,100 square miles with a population of 1,275,000 and that slightly affected to 967 square miles with a population of 584,465. This, the third stage of the famine, ended about the middle of June, when the monsoon rain reached the district, as it did on the 16th.

“ The fourth stage of the famine was contemporaneous with the rainy season, and was characterized by a gradual mitigation of distress, as employment became generally available and money-lenders began to open their purse-strings, when a new crop was seen to be coming up well. The *china* millet, which was gathered in June, was also a help. During this period, however, there was on several occasions grave cause for the most gloomy forebodings owing to scanty rainfall and untimely and prolonged breaks, especially in that part of the district which had all along been suffering most acutely. The classes who were being relieved gratuitously continued to suffer as greatly as ever for a good while after those who could work were able to shift for themselves, as private charity could not be relied on to come to their rescue until the *bhadai* harvest was assured, while prices were higher than ever until after the middle of August. About the beginning of September, when a decided fall in prices came about, an area of 1,400 square miles with an estimated population of one million was removed from the category of severe to that of slight distress, but the total ‘ affected ’ area remained the same as before. At this time 700 square miles with a population of 275,000 was still classed as severely affected, and 2,367 square miles, with a population of 1,584,000 as slightly affected. By the 25th of September all relief in the latter area was closed, but some works remained open until the 8th of October in the former tract, i.e. the Ramnagar part of the district, which had been the first to suffer nearly a year before.”

As regards the number of those relieved, the whole population of the district was affected by the middle of May, relief in some form or other having to be given, and this continued to be the case until the *bhadai* harvest began to come in in the middle of September. Taking this, then, as the population affected, and 10 months as the period of



famine, the daily average of 59,336 relieved on works and of 44,960 relieved gratuitously represents a percentage of 3.19 and 2.42, respectively, on the population affected. The time when the numbers in receipt of Government relief of all kinds was largest of all was in the second week of June, when it reached a daily average of 219,005 persons or 11.77 per cent of the affected population, of whom 123,007 or 6.61 per cent were relieved on works and 95,998 or 5.16 gratuitously. The number relieved on works, reckoned in terms of one day, was a little over 18 millions as compared with 15 millions in 1874, and the aggregate number receiving gratuitous relief was over 31 millions. The total expenditure by Government amounted to nearly Rs. 25 lakhs, of which one-half was spent in wages and a quarter in gratuitous relief, while Rs. 3 lakhs were advanced as loans. Owing to the extent and adequacy of the relief measures, no deaths occurred from starvation.

Since the great famine of 1897 the railway has been extended through the north of the district by lines from Bettiah to Bagaha via Narkatiagunj and from Narkatiagunj via Raxaul Bairagnia. These extensions insure rapid communication practically throughout the district.

PROTECTIVE  
MEASURES.

The northern areas of the district are also now protected largely by irrigation from failure of crops due to shortage of rainfall. The Tribeni canal and the Dhaka canal have been constructed in addition to the Tiur canal. The former is the more ambitious project, running as it does across the waterway of the north of the district. Irrigation from it therefore has often been interrupted by breaches due to sudden floods in the hill-streams. Difficulty has also often been experienced owing to silting of the Gandak at the head sluice of the canal at Bhaisalotan and also silting of the canal itself. The canal, in spite of these difficulties, has been of very great benefit to the district. These difficulties have not been met with, in the case of the Dhaka canal which ensures magnificent rice crops in the area irrigated except in years of very unusual flood.

LIABILITY TO  
FLOOD.

The configuration of Champaran renders it peculiarly liable to inundation. In the past the Great Gandak, a snow-fed river, has caused serious floods. But the embankment maintained by Government along the left bank of the river protects an area of 2,693 square miles. This embankment



which is 83 miles long (including 21 miles of retired lines) extends from near Bagaha to the southern extremity of the district but there are four breaches in it. It is kept under a contract with the proprietors of the estates protected from inundation. The first contract was made in 1883, the second in 1903 and the third in 1923 for another term of 20 years, the sum of Rs. 25,600 per annum being fixed for the maintenance of the embankment.

Floods are frequently caused by heavy rain in the foot-hills of Nepal and the Sumeswar range. The hill-streams fed from these hills rise very rapidly and overflow their banks inundating large areas. These floods in the north of the district are very short in duration as owing to the fall in the general level of the country, the water rapidly drains off. In this area, therefore, little damage is done to the crops. The people are used to these floods and little loss of life is caused, though in more severe floods there is considerable loss of livestock. In the centre and east of the district extensive tracts are liable to be flooded by the overflow of the Sikrahna, Lal Bakya and Baghmati rivers and their tributaries.

#### FLOOD OF 1898.

The highest flood on record in Champaran was that which occurred in September 1898, when over 20 inches of rain fell at Motihari from the 4th to the 10th. The tract most seriously affected extended over 350 square miles or about one-tenth of the district, lying chiefly in a strip about 4 miles broad on either bank of the Sikrahna between Segauli and Mehsi, but the inundations were also of considerable extent in the south, where the floods of the Baghmati met those of the Sikrahna. The loss of life was very slight, only 16 persons being drowned but about 220 cattle and over 1,000 sheep and goats were swept away, and not less than one-third of the houses in the badly-affected area collapsed. The circuit house at Motihari fell, and the police-stations at Segauli, Madhuban, Chauradano and Raxaul were destroyed. The Bengal and North-Western Railway was topped for miles and badly breached, with the result that traffic was at a standstill for over a month; while the Sugauli-Raxaul line was most severely damaged, the bank being completely washed away in places. Both these lines run across a strong line of drainage; and the waterway being insufficient the flood was given an accumulated volume and velocity, which greatly increased its power for destruction.



Most of the *bhadai* crops in the affected area were destroyed, the loss being estimated at about two-thirds of the outturn. On the other hand, the winter rice was not damaged to any considerable extent and in fact was benefited by the heavy rain except in the tract close to the Sikrahna. The cultivators were also compensated by the rich deposit of silt, in some places 3 inches thick, which was left on the land submerged by the flood; and no sooner did the water recede than they began to prepare their fields for the cold weather crops. The labouring classes were not in any distress, as there was employment for all willing to work, houses being rebuilt, lands prepared for the *rabi* crops, and roads repaired on all sides. Agricultural loans were granted on a large scale but no other relief measures were necessary.

The last serious flood occurred in August 1906, owing to the overflow of the Sikrahna river and its tributaries, also in a less degree to the temporary rise of the Great Gandak, by which some damage was caused in the Bettiah and Gobindgunj thanas. The whole of the Motihari and Madhuban thanas, a portion of the Dhaka thana, and small tracts in the east of the Kessariya thana, the north of the Gobindgunj thana, and the east of the Bettiah thana were affected, the worst damage being in the area between Siraha and Mehsi in the Madhuban thana. The area affected was roughly 400 square miles and here the maize crop was almost entirely swept away, while the *bhadai* and *aghani* rice crops were seriously damaged. Considerable distress was caused by the flood, and it was found necessary to open kitchens for granting gratuitous relief and to advance a large sum in loans. Test works were opened, but failed to attract labour and soon after the floods evidence of the marvellous recuperative powers of the people was forthcoming, for scarcely had the flood subsided when they began to sow and transplant the paddy seedlings.

In subsequent years flood occurred in the district on a comparatively small scale, especially in the years 1910, 1915 and 1923. In 1915 the flood was high in the Sikrahna and Baghmata in the south-east of the district. *Takavi* loans were given out but no other relief was necessary. Collection of these loans was suspended in some areas in 1916 owing to a further flood in the Sadr subdivision of small dimensions. In 1923 a heavy flood in the Sikrahna occurred which was exceptionally high in the north of the district. The

Govt. letter.

Flood of 1906.

1910, 1915 and 1923.



flood was very sudden. There was no warning and the level in the Sikrahna rose as much as 5 feet in four hours. In spite of this there appears to have been little loss of life as the people, well accustomed to similar conditions, retired to high ground without delay. Four corpses were seen in Ramnagar thana but were not identified and no reports were received from the villages in the area of any loss of life. The flood backed up against the Tribeni canal and the railway embankment breaching both. The damage to the Tribeni canal was estimated at Rs. 75,000. The railway between Bhairgunj and Khairpokhra and between Sikta and Gokhula stations was also seriously damaged and road communications also suffered, damage amounting to Rs. 5,000 being done to a pile bridge near Lauriya. A number of cattle were lost, chiefly from among large herds which grazed in the north of the district. Considerable loss was incurred in the Narkatiagunj Bazar owing to stores of grain and salt being damaged by flood. The flood, however, in other respects caused little loss. Water rapidly drained off and the crops were probably all the better afterwards. No distress was caused and no measures of relief were found necessary.

1924.

In 1924 there was a slight flood in the Gandak river in September which caused no loss of life or damage to property generally. This flood was important because two iron girders of the Bagaha railway bridge were washed away. The bridge has never been repaired and in consequence direct railway communications have been interrupted between Champaran and Gorakhpur. The direct cause of this disaster was rather a change in the course of the river than excessive flood.

Local  
Distress  
in 1931.

Early in March 1931 the district suffered from a very severe hail-storm, which caused great damage to the *rabi* crops. The area affected consisted of a strip on the average about 10 miles wide through the centre of the district, viz. south Dhanaha thana, Jogaputti thana, the areas round Sirsia Factory, Bettiah, Lalsaraiya Factory, Segauli and along the Sikrahna to Lal Bekiya Ghat on the Motihari-Dhaka road.

The area most affected was that bordering the Sikrahna from Segauli to Lal Bekiya Ghat. In this area the *bhadai* crop of 1930 had failed owing to flood and consequently owing to the slump in prices, money was very scarce and raiyats were relying on the *rabi* crop for their living. Again in 1931 the *bhadai* crop was largely destroyed by flood and the *mahajans* could not advance money to any large extent.



The following measures of relief were, therefore, found necessary to remedy or alleviate distress. In the Sadr subdivision the District Distress Relief Committee was started in July 1931 and gave gratuitous relief to 11,133 persons in 29 badly-affected villages. Subsequently the Marwari Relief Society took up the work about the third week of September and continued it till the middle of October in Sadr subdivision and till the middle of November in Bettiah subdivision. *Takavi* loans amounting to Rs. 21,502 had been advanced in the Sadr subdivision. The Bettiah Estate in the Motihari Circle advanced Rs. 43,348 as seed loans in the Sadr subdivision. In addition the Bettiah Estate undertook seven relief works at a cost of Rs. 16,001 in the Sadr subdivision during the months of June and October.

In the Bettiah subdivision gratuitous relief was given out in some three centres in Jogaputti thana and also in Dhanaha thana and Colonel Lees of Lal Saraiya gave out relief himself in some of the villages of his *elaka* partly from his own funds and partly from the funds of the District Distress Relief Committee. Rs. 4,630 was given out as *takavi* in the Bettiah subdivision and Rs. 33,450 by the Bettiah Estate as seed loan. The estate also undertook five relief works at a cost of Rs. 5,979 in the Bettiah subdivision. In addition to the above the Bettiah Estate has also granted suspension of rent in the areas in which seed loans have been granted.



## CHAMPARAN.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE INDIGO INDUSTRY AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE RELATIONS  
BETWEEN LANDLORDS AND TENANTS.INTRODUC-  
TION OF THE  
INDUSTRY.

THE pioneer of the indigo industry in Bihar was Francois Grand, Collector of Tirhut (Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga) in the years 1782—85, who left it on record that he introduced the manufacturing of indigo after the European manner, encouraged the establishment of indigo works and plantations and erected three at his own expense. Thirty years appear, however, to have elapsed before the cultivation of indigo by European methods was introduced into Champaran; for it was not till 1813 that the first factory was founded by Colonel Hickey at Bara. Shortly afterwards, the Rajpur and Turkaulia concerns were started by Messrs. Moran and Hill, respectively, and the cultivation then steadily extended, for in 1830 we find the Collector urging the construction of roads for the development of the country and reporting that Government would be able to avail itself of the assistance of the indigo planters spread over a large extent of country. During the first half of the century, however, indigo had to yield precedence to sugar, the manufacture of which was the premier industry of Champaran, steam sugar factories being scattered over several parganas. About 1850 the high prices obtained for indigo dealt a final blow at this industry, the cultivation of sugar was replaced by indigo, and the sugar factories were converted into indigo concerns.

SYSTEMS OF  
CULTIVATION.

The following is a description of the systems of indigo cultivation which were followed in Champaran during the flourishing days of the industry. The two systems were *ziraat*, i.e., direct cultivation by means of hired servants on landlord's *zirat* (more correctly landlord's *bakasht* land) and *asamiwar* or cultivation through tenants of the factory (*asami*). A third system, which was uncommon in Champaran, was *khuski* or cultivation by means of agreements with outside raiyats. Roughly, one-third of the cultivation was carried on under the *ziraat* system and two-thirds under the *asamiwar* system.



The term *ziraat* has been incorrectly applied to any land in the direct occupation of a factory, and not only to land held by a proprietor or superior tenure-holder. *Ziraat* indigo land was cultivated by the factory at its own expense and with hired labour. Over one-fourth of the area under indigo was of this class, and owing to its careful cultivation returned the best profits. Ziraat.

When the system of *asamiwar* cultivation was followed, the indigo was grown by the factory tenants, under the direction of the factory's servants, at fixed rates per bigha. Generally documents called *sattas* were executed, the raiyat receiving an advance and binding himself to grow indigo on a certain specified portion of his holding, and to pay damages if he should fail to carry out his contract. All the expenses of cultivation were paid by the raiyat, but the seed was given by the factory, which also cut and carted away the indigo, the raiyat being paid for the latter at fixed rates. When the contracts (*sattas*) were executed, the cultivators generally agreed for a term of years to grow indigo on 3 cottahs per bigha of their holdings. This was sometimes called the *tinkathia* system, but must be distinguished from the system, already almost extinct under which the planters appropriated 3 cottahs per bigha out of the raiyat's holding, giving him in return nothing beyond a proportionate reduction of rent. Asamiwar.

*Badlain* or exchange was a prominent characteristic of the *asamiwar* system. Lands, after being cropped three and four years successively with indigo, require to be sown with grain and other surface root crops. Indigo, being a plant with a deep root, forms an excellent rotation crop with them, but successive crops of indigo exhaust the soil. Hence it seemed necessary to arrange for an exchange of land, and *badlain* was a practice universally followed.

Agreements executed by raiyats who were not the tenants of the factory, were called *khushi*, as the cultivators voluntarily agreed to grow indigo. In this case the factory supplied the seed and paid for the crop when delivered, at privileged rates; it sometimes also gave an advance to the cultivators at a light rate of interest. The system was very rarely found in Champaran, as, if it is to pay, indigo requires selected lands, carefully cultivated, and rotated in an intelligent system; the rate of remuneration has to be high in order to Khushi.



induce the outside raiyat to grow indigo; and in Champaran factories had such extensive tenure-holding rights that they could generally make better terms with their own raiyats, and had no need to enlist the services of cultivators holding land in other estates.

#### Kurtauli.

Under the *kurtauli* system (sometimes also called the *shikmi* system) the factory sublet from a raiyat and grew the indigo itself with its own labour, the rent agreed on being deducted from the rent due from the raiyat to the factory in its capacity as landlord; the factory was, in short, a mere under-raiyat. *Kurtauli* leases were rare in Champaran and appear to have been more common in Motihari thana than elsewhere.

#### Hiring of carts.

An important feature in indigo cultivation was the hiring of carts, which was generally effected by means of agreements, as it is imperative that the indigo plant should be cut and brought into the factory as soon as it is ripe. In consideration of an advance, the owner of the cart agreed for a term of years to place it at the disposal of the factory, and in return received a fixed rate of payment a little below the ordinary rate.

#### Advance of the Industry.

The advance of the industry was seriously threatened in 1867, when there was a strong demonstration against the cultivation of indigo, accompanied, in some instances, by acts of violence. The causes of dissatisfaction on the part of the raiyats were several. They objected to the unusual trouble and hard labour required for the successful production of the indigo plant, and felt that the rates being paid for its cultivation did not give adequate remuneration for the labour expended. There was a widespread knowledge that enormous profits were made from indigo, and they had a natural desire to obtain a larger share of them, while the high prices of food had raised the profits obtained from the cultivation of food-grain and therefore made indigo still more unpopular than before. Further, they resented the harassment of the factory servants, who, besides committing various acts of oppression, were alleged to be in the habit of taking a large percentage of the payments made to the raiyats as their own perquisites under the general name of *dasturi*. In addition to their grievances, there was an absence, on the part of the managers of factories, of that sympathy with the raiyats which used formerly to be displayed by the old proprietor-planters, who paid more attention to the well-being of their tenantry.



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The opposition of the raiyats showed itself in a general refusal to sow indigo, and in some cases in the forcible appropriation for other crops of the lands already prepared for indigo. The first instance of such proceedings occurred in a village called Jaukatia, the raiyats of which, in defiance of the contract into which they had entered with the Lalsaraiya factory, sowed their lands with cold weather crops; and this example was rapidly followed by other villagers. As the planters had very considerable interests at stake, and it was necessary that they should receive prompt and final decisions on their complaints, Government, at their request, established a small cause court at Motihari, with jurisdiction over the entire district of Champaran, for the trial of all cases of breach of contract between them and the raiyats. This court was composed of two Judges, the one a covenanted Civil Servant and the other a native gentleman; and these two officers were directed to sit together for the trial of all suits connected with the indigo question. The result of this measure was entirely satisfactory. Though few suits were instituted, the mere knowledge that such a court was at hand to enforce promptly the payment of damages for breach of contracts was apparently sufficient to deter the raiyats from wantonly breaking them. At the same time, the demands of the raiyats were met by concessions from the planters, whose bearing was most moderate and temperate throughout this trying period. Within nine weeks of the establishment of the court, the Lieutenant-Governor was able to put an end to its special constitution, leaving the native Judge only to preside over it. Before it was too late to revive the prospects of the indigo season, all open opposition to the cultivation had ceased.

The disputes between the raiyats and planters had at one time threatened to become very serious. The local officers almost unanimously reported that the cultivation of indigo had become very unpopular, and that there was not a raiyat who would not abandon the cultivation if he could; and this state of things was ascribed as much to the insufficiency of the remuneration which the raiyats received, as to the exactions, oppression, and annoyance to which they were exposed at the hands of the factory servants. Government was satisfied that the time had passed when planters could hope to carry on an indigo concern profitably by forcing on the raiyats a cultivation and labour which were to them unprofitable; and it was clear that, in the altered circumstances of the



time, they must be prepared either to close their factories, or to give to the raiyats, in some shape or other, remuneration which should make it worth their while to grow indigo. This necessity was recognized by the general body of planters, and they yielded to the pressure, raising the rate of remuneration from Rs. 7-8-0 to Rs. 12 per bigha.

It was believed that this movement among the raiyats was instigated by certain persons who had their own interests to serve; and this belief appeared to be borne out by the fact that the open opposition to the planters was mainly confined to the estates of the Maharaja of Bettiah. The management of the Bettiah Estate by an English gentlemen was said to have given rise to much dissatisfaction among the influential natives of the Raja's household, whose opportunities of enriching themselves at the expense of the Raja had been restricted thereby; and the combination among the raiyats was said to have been engineered by them, mainly with the object of involving the manager of the estate in difficulties so that the Raja, disgusted with the management, might allow his affairs to revert to their former neglected condition.

Ten years later the financial embarrassment of the same estate resulted in the indigo industry being placed on a firm footing. Hitherto the planters had been able only to secure temporary leases of land, but circumstances now arose which gave them a more permanent and secure hold on the soil. By 1876 the Bettiah Raj, owing to the extravagance of the Maharaja and the mismanagement of his employees had become heavily involved in debt; and, as a means of extricating it from its difficulties, a European Manager, Mr. T. Gibbon, was appointed. One of the first steps of the new Manager was to ensure financial equilibrium, and the Bulliland House consented to float a sterling loan of nearly Rs. 95 lakhs, on the sole condition of substantial European security. To satisfy this condition and cover the interest on the loan, permanent leases of villages were granted to indigo planters, and the industry was thus placed on a secure basis. Permanent rights in the land being assured, the cultivation of indigo was widely extended, until by the end of the 19th century no less than 21 factories, with 48 outworks, had been established, while the area under indigo was 95,970 acres or 6.6 per cent of the cultivated area.

Landed  
interests.

In the settlement report of 1899 it is stated that the indigo concerns exercised the rights of landlords in nearly half



of the district, either as proprietors or tenure-holders, and that the indigo industry owed the strength of its position in this district to the fact that the planters possessed a landlord's interest in so large an area; not the least noticeable result of which was that most of their indigo being grown on land of which they were the landlords, they were relieved from the necessity of haggling with petty proprietors and cultivators, to which their less fortunate fellow planters had to submit in Saran and Tirhut.

The proportion of land held by planters as proprietors was inconsiderable, amounting to only  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent in the whole district. Generally speaking, the interest of the indigo concerns in the land was mainly that of tenure-holders, but in thanas Bettiah, Motihari, Gobindgunj and Kessariya, where the proportion of land held on permanent tenure varied from 23 to 45 per cent, it was practically as secure as a proprietary right.

Regarding the advantages and disadvantages of indigo cultivation, the following remarks are quoted from the Settlement Report of Mr. (now Sir Charles) Stevenson Moore, with some slight condensation :

“ My conclusions are that the indigo industry in relation to Government and the administration, in relation to land-owners, and in relation to labourers, confers very decided benefits on the district but that in relation to cultivators its advantages are very much more questionable. In Champaran the utility of the indigo factory is largely connected with the management of the Bettiah Raj. It has been seen that it was their security which rendered possible the raising of the Bettiah sterling loan. Further, while the factories, to the best of my knowledge, are good and considerate landlords to their raiyats, they increase the value of property they supervise by dint of good management, and pay up their rents with punctuality. The Bettiah Raj has not the organization requisite for the efficient management of all its estates direct. That, relying on indigo and not on zamindari for their profits, indigo factories have been available to share with it the responsibility of management, at a very slender rate of remuneration, has proved a decided advantage to that estate.

“ The benefits of the indigo industry to the labouring population are still more marked, for these are the classes in greatest need of support. The average number of labourers



employed is high and more than half the labour is employed in the cold weather months, when these classes are most liable to destitution. It is true that the factory rates of labour are somewhat lower than those ordinarily paid, and it is often urged that factories have had a tendency to keep down labour rates. A large employer of labour naturally gets it cheaper than the man who employs a single cooly, and if factories have attempted to keep down rates, they have not invariably succeeded, as the rates differ considerably in different tracts.

“ In relation to the agriculturists, its merits are more questionable. But here again, so far as raiyats not called upon to grow indigo are concerned, an indigo factory, as landlord, is a very decided advantage. The indigo concern's best interests centre in maintaining stability of rents, and what is of more importance, this truth is generally both recognized by them and acted upon. Again, non-indigo raiyats who are tenants of factories have their accounts kept well and accurately, are given proper receipts, are not called on for additional demands to meet domestic ceremonies so common in native estates, and are protected and helped when they fall into difficulties. Pecuniarily, a cultivator loses per acre by growing indigo. This deficiency may or may not be made up by other advantages, but these are less tangible and he does not appreciate them at their full value. He finds that if he had grown another crop, he would have made more money. He forgets that he received an advance when he required it that the existence of indigo gives him more profits from his cart than he would otherwise obtain; and that his rent, had the village been leased to a native *thikadar* instead of to an indigo planter, would probably have been more onerous.

“ The fact remains that the raiyats, on the whole, do not like indigo, though I do not think they possess very active sentiments on the subject, their attitude being one of passive acquiescence. Again the system of accounts is open to the objection that it tends to check independence of thought and action. The accounts for rents, advances and indigo are all mixed up together, and though kept no doubt well and accurately, are incomprehensible to the ordinary uneducated mind. Finally the system of exchange (*badlain*) raises apprehension in the raiyat's mind that his tenant right will be interfered with. His tenant right is, as a rule, preserved unimpaired, and the record-of-rights will afford him full



protection. Moreover, indigo, as a rotation crop for food grains, distinctly benefits the land. But a raiyat may be asked to give, in *badlain* for indigo, a plot which he has liberally manured and carefully tilled in anticipation of fat profits to be realized from some other crop. Whatever the cause, the fact remains that the *badlain* system is not generally liked. My general conclusions then are that the cultivators who grow indigo on agreement receive little advantage from it, and in their own opinion the crop is generally believed to be pecuniarily disadvantageous; that, on the other hand, only two-thirds of the indigo cultivation is of this nature, that is to-day only 4 per cent of the cultivated area in the district; and that to be set against the real and imaginary disadvantages to a comparatively small body of raiyats are the great and material benefits that accrue to the administration, to landlords and to labourers from the presence in the district of the indigo concerns and their industry."

Indigo factories were more common in the headquarters subdivision and less common in the northern thanas, which consist mainly of rice lands unsuitable for the growth of indigo. The following is a list of the indigo factories at work in the district at that time :—

MOTIHARI SUBDIVISION.

*Factories.*

*Sub-Factories.*

Bara	...	...	Gaundra.
			Jugaulia.
			Mahuawa.
			Rasulpur.
Belwa	...	...	.....
Motihari	...	...	Chailaha.
			Haraj.
			Mirpur.
			Purnahia.
			Sugaon.
Nawada	...	...	Parsauni.
Padumker	...	.....	.....
Pipra	...	...	Daini Math.
			Dhekaha.
			Dhobwalia.
			Madhuban.



## MOTIHARI SUBDIVISION—concl'd.

<i>Factories.</i>		<i>Sub-Factories.</i>
Rajpur	...	Hussaini. Jamunapur. Pakri.
Siraha	...	Parewa.
Telhara	...	.....
Tetaria	...	Bala. Chahunia.
Turkaulia	...	Barharwa. Gahiri (Bettiah subdivision). Khairwa (        do.        ). Makhwa. Olahu. Sakhwa. Tejpurwa.

## BETTIAH SUBDIVISION.

Bairia	...	Nautan.
Kuria	...	Lalgarh.
Lalsaraiya	...	Farwa. Madhopur. Rajghat.
Malahia	...	Sirsia.
Parsa	...	Harpur.
Sathi	...	.....

Subsequent  
history.

From about 1900 the industry began to suffer from the competition of the artificial dye in Europe and from the rise in prices of food grains and the consequent demand for land in Bihar. The price of the natural dye fell rapidly from Rs. 232 per factory maund to Rs. 130 in 1912-13. The area under cultivation naturally decreased and the history of the industry gradually merged into the more general history of relations between landlords and tenants. In 1900 the *tinkathia* system prevailed as described above. In the non-indigo concerns the raiyats paid to their immediate landlords various *abwabs* with a general incidence of about Rs. 3 per bigha : it should be remembered that these non-indigo concerns were mostly in the north of the district, where the large bigha is



prevalent. The indigo concerns therefore began to decrease the area under cultivation and to levy compensation from the tenants for releasing them from the obligation of cultivation of indigo under the *tinkathia* system. It is clear from contemporary records that the words *hunda* and *tinkathia* were used to indicate compensations of this kind. This coincided with the gradual awakening of the tenantry to the doubtful legality of these additional considerations. Complaints were received but led to no improvement, as the tenants exaggerated their grievances. At this period the reduction of opium cultivation occasioned considerable loss to the raiyats and they were all the more ready to revolt against the existing system. The bad feeling increased until widespread disturbances broke out in 1907-1908. The most noteworthy event of this year was the brutal murder of Mr. Bloomfield, Manager of the Telhara Concern which was the outcome not of any of the larger questions at issue, but of an isolated case in which the Manager refused to sanction the transfer of holdings.

From early in the year 1907 there was a general feeling of uneasiness in the Sathi *dehat*. Continual meetings of the Muhammadan raiyats were held under the guidance of one Shaikh Gulab. Acts of violence were committed on factory servants by raiyats who refused to labour for the factory after having received advances. Convictions were obtained, but reversed on appeal. Arson followed and most significant of all, the sowing down of the raiyats' own crops in the Tinkathia field set aside for indigo. More convictions were set aside by the appellate court, and the prestige of the recusant party was enhanced. A common fund was raised for contesting cases and petitions were put in against the factory specifying—

The Sathi  
distur-  
bances.

- (1) that *hurja* or damages for not growing indigo was being taken although no *sattas* had been executed;
- (2) that other illegal cesses were taken by the *amla*; and
- (3) that the services of labour and cartmen were not paid for.

The factory shut off the supply of water through the *pains* which it had constructed, and there followed thefts of water and prosecutions on this account. Some of the leading



raiyaats, Shaikh Gulab and others, were made special constables. They refused to act, and were convicted under the Police Act. The High Court set aside the conviction in March 1908. Meanwhile the tenants had petitioned His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor. But in an enquiry that followed by the Subdivisional Officer and the Collector the raiyaats grossly exaggerated, and thus obscured, the real facts. In February and March 1908 raiyaats disputed with the factory the possession of the oats and other crops grown in the *tinkathia* land and thousands of cases were instituted. In sympathy with these disturbances meanwhile the raiyaats of the Bhasurari factory, which holds villages in *thika* lease under the Ramnagar Estate, petitioned against their landlord and complained of illegal exactions. The upshot of the Sathi disturbances was agreements that whatever crops in the *tinkathia* land were grown from factory seed should be taken by the factory; while the raiyaats should take the crops grown from seed supplied by themselves, and that such raiyaats as did not wish to grow indigo or oats on the *tinkathia* system, should pay for their irrigation from the *pains* at the rate of Rs. 3 for every bigha of their holding instead of the previous nominal rate of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  annas, and should execute agreements to this effect. The registration of these *pains* as improvement was in progress, when the more serious disturbance of 1908-09 broke out, and temporarily put a stop to the work. When conditions were settled again, the raiyaats quietly executed agreements or *sattas*.

**The Bettiah  
distur-  
bances.**

The general spirit of uneasiness continued through the summer of 1908 and at the Bettiah *mela*, a general feeling of dissatisfaction was expressed against the whole *tinkathia* system, and the raiyaats more or less agreed to take the law into their own hands, and break the system once for all. An outbreak of violence started in the area of Parsa Factory and spread to the Mallahia, Bairia and Kuria areas. It became necessary to employ military police to preserve order. Fifty-seven criminal cases were instituted and 266 people were convicted of acts of violence. The disturbances were thus quelled in November 1908. Mr. Gourlay, who was then Director of Agriculture and had at one time been Subdivisional Officer in Bettiah, was deputed to make an informal enquiry which he completed in December and January. His report was submitted in April 1909, and, after informal discussions between Government and members of



the Planters' Association, certain changes were made in the existing system, the chief items being—

- (1) an increase of the price per acre paid for indigo cultivation to the raiyats from Rs. 12 to Rs. 13, and
- (2) the introduction of a by-law whereby the area to be taken from the raiyat each year was reduced from 3 cottahs to 2 cottahs in the bigha.

The agitation subsided and raiyats seemed, partly at least, to have regretted it. The decent element among them entirely disapproved of the acts of violence that had been committed while the more turbulent element was cowed by the additional police and the punishments actually inflicted, and concluded that there was no use in agitating against the indigo system, which must go on as before. Discontent, however, against the whole existing system continued, and the recusant element gained confidence from the immunity enjoyed by the agitators in general, from the acquittal of the persons convicted in connection with the Sathi disturbances of 1907-08, and particularly from the modification by the High Court of the death sentence passed on the murderers of Mr. Bloomfield.

The years 1910 and 1911 were free from incident. In December 1911 a large body of raiyats assembled at Narkatiaganj railway station to state their grievances to His Majesty the King-Emperor, who was then on his way back from Nepal and in January 1912 they sent representatives to submit a memorial in Calcutta. In September and October 1912 in a series of articles in the *Biharee* newspaper entitled "The Planter and the Raiyat" the system was again strenuously attacked. Meanwhile with the decrease of indigo cultivation the landlord's practice to claim compensation from the tenants for releasing them from the obligation to grow indigo became general. Compensation was levied by two methods. First in villages held in *mukarrari* or permanent lease in which the planter was really in the position of proprietor, the raiyats executed contracts to pay enhanced rents. The enhancements were about 60 per cent over the original rents and were effected by registered documents. This method was popularly known as *sharahbeshi*.

In Sharahbeshi and Tawan.



Secondly in villages held on temporary lease the planter took lump sums called *tawan* from the tenants. There were of course exceptions, for instance the Rajpur concern adopted the *tawan* system in all its villages, the Pipra concern while enhancing rent in the *mukarrari* villages continued *tinkathia* cultivation in the *thikadari* villages. The Lalsaraiya concern adopted neither method but merely assessed rent on excess areas discovered in the possession of the raiyats at the last settlement, which the factory had agreed to leave unassessed so long as the raiyats continued *tinkathia* cultivation.

These substituted arrangements proceeded through 1912, 1913 and 1914 and were in full swing when the Revisional Survey and Settlement operations started in October 1913. The situation was complicated by the fact that the Bettiah Estate applied for enhancement of rent under section 105 of the Bengal Tenancy Act in all its *thikadari* villages.

In 1914-15 the record-of-rights for the Bettiah subdivision was attested. Towards the end of 1914 a number of petitions were presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor complaining of *abwab* and other matters, which were reported on by the Settlement Department. It was quite clearly proved that illegal *abwabs* were being collected on a large scale. The Bettiah Estate stopped all such levies by its *thikadars*, but the administration was not in a position to enforce a similar prohibition in the Ramnagar Estate. In 1915-16 the record of the Motihari subdivision was attested. The legality of *sharahbeshi* was strenuously contested by the raiyats. The majority of the enhanced rents were allowed as the raiyats failed to prove their main plea, which was that force had been used to procure the enhanced agreements. The raiyats, especially the Bhumihaar Brahmins of the Pipra and Turkaulia areas, were inclined to be turbulent in their objection, to these decisions, and the settlement officers had a continuously unpleasant experience. No actual violence, however, occurred and the raiyats eventually seemed inclined to accept the enhanced rents as inevitable.

Mr.  
Gandhi's  
visit.

In the meantime the leaders of the Bettiah raiyats had enlisted public interest outside the district. One of the raiyats attended the Provincial Congress at Chapra in 1915 and the all-India Congress in 1916. In the spring and summer of 1917 Mr. Gandhi visited the district and enquired into the complaints of raiyats. He submitted to Government



a preliminary report on the 15th May. The district was in a state of unparalleled excitement. The payment of rents to European planters was entirely suspended. Their zamindari servants were treated with contempt and indignity and some factory buildings were burnt down. Government, therefore, appointed a committee to enquire into the agrarian conditions of Champaran consisting of a President, two other official members, Mr. D. T. Reid, a Muzaffarpur planter, Mr. Gandhi and the Hon'ble Raja Harihar Prashad Narayan Singh whose place was subsequently taken by the Hon'ble Raja Kirtyanand Singh of Banaili.

The Committee found the *tinkathia* system to be Agrarian Committee. unpopular, radically defective and inconsistent with the relations that should exist between landlords and tenants under modern conditions : it recommended that emergency legislation should be introduced to effect the abolition of the system and to prescribe the conditions under which indigo cultivation might be continued on a purely voluntary basis.

As the feeling against *sharahbeshi* was so strong and the prospect of ruinous legislation so imminent it was recommended that the enhancements of rent should be reduced by 20 to 26 per cent and that all entries on the record-of-rights regarding existing obligations to grow indigo should be cancelled.

The taking of *tawan* in the opinion of the Committee was not justified in temporarily-leased villages, while in permanently-leased villages it was desirable that an arrangement analogous to that in connection with *sharahbeshi* should be made. It was, therefore, proposed that in the former the Bettiah Estate should make it a condition of the renewal of the leases to the *thikadars* that 25 per cent of the *tawan* collected should be refunded to the tenants through the estate, and that the estate should for seven years forego enhancement of rent granted in the settlement courts on the ground of rise in prices, from any tenant who had paid *tawan*.

The Government accepted the Committee's recommendations generally. Accordingly a Bill was introduced in the Legislative Council in the cold weather 1917-18, and in its final form the Champaran Agrarian Act (Act I of 1918) received the assent of the Governor-General on the 1st of May 1918. The Act abolishes the *tinkathia* system and renders invalid any existing or future contract between a landlord and a tenant which contains a condition to set apart the land of the tenancy



Decay of the  
industry.

or any portion thereof for the cultivation of a particular crop; though contracts between tenant and landlord, for a period not exceeding three years, for the delivery of a specified weight of a particular crop, as distinguished from the cultivation of a certain area with that crop, are permitted. In accordance with a compromise arrived at between the raiyats, on the one hand, and the Pipra, Turkauli and Motihari factories on the other, it is provided that the *sharahbeshi* enhancements should be reduced, with effect from the 1st October 1917, by 20 per cent, in the case of Turkaulia, and by 26 per cent in all other cases. On the other hand, where the *sharahbeshi* enhancement had either been disallowed by the Settlement Department, or not imposed at all, and the indigo condition was in force and entered in the record-of-rights, it is provided that the entry should be cancelled, the condition abolished, and the rent of the tenancy enhanced, to an extent proportionate to the reduced enhancement allowed in respect of *sharahbeshi* tenancies belonging to the same or neighbouring villages of the same landlord. Finally the Committee's recommendation to confer on the Collector summary powers to fine landlords for the exaction of *abwabs* was rejected by the legislative body and omitted from the Act.

Subsequent  
agrarian  
disputes.

The war of 1914-18 curtailed the supply of aniline dyes and the price of indigo rose to Rs. 600 per factory maund. The profits of the Champaran concerns rose proportionately but owing to the disputes described above, the area under cultivation did not increase very materially. After the war the prices dropped rapidly to their former level. The industry ceased to be of any importance and finally died out completely in 1931.

The passing of the Agrarian Act set at rest all disputes directly concerned with the industry, but the general discontent broke out in other directions. There was considerable excitement and opposition on the part of the tenants to the enhanced rents. In 1918-19 there were a large number of criminal cases between factory landlords and tenants. The latter objected to paying their rents: in their raiyati holdings they claimed fishery rights and disputed the landlords' rights in trees, and there were disputes over grazing rights. These subjects had been raised before the Committee and attained importance then for the first time. In 1919-20 the certificate procedure under section 158-A was granted to certain European *mukarraridars* in respect of their worst villages,



Though the Bettiah Estate set apart exercise grounds for cattle and the rights of tenants to a half share of the trees on raiyati holdings was settled by a ruling of the High Court, the situation did not improve.

In 1921 the non-co-operation movement evinced a distinctly anti-landlord tendency and resulted in a general inclination to withhold rents though there was no definite no-rent campaign. There was bad feeling against European *thikadars* and *mokarraridars* in spite of the fact that they behaved with admirable restraint.

The Turkaulia, Pipra and Motihari concerns applied for certificate procedure for the collection of rents and Indian landlords also complained of the difficulty of collecting rent. There were also disputes over fisheries. Some of the European *thikadars* in the north of the district were on bad terms with the raiyats : the causes of dispute which culminated in the burning of the Chauterwa factory were mainly due to the labour supply and grazing. A detachment of mounted military police was posted in the north of the district. Owing to this and the cessation of the non-co-operation campaign relations improved in the following years.

In 1923-24 the certificate procedure was considerably extended as there was still widespread difficulty in collecting rents. Subsequently relations were satisfactory : though there was intermittent agitation regarding the rights of tenants to free-grazing and wood in the jungles in the north of the district. Between 1924 and 1928 the Turkaulia, Pipra, Motihari and Rajpur concerns in the south and the Bairiah concern in the north surrendered their leases to the Bettiah Estate, and their villages were reabsorbed in the estate and taken under *khas* management.

In 1929-30 there was considerable agitation in the Doon valley in the Ramnagar Estate regarding the recognition of tenants who had cultivated *gairmazrua malik's* lands, the cutting of trees in the jungles and petty illegal exactions of the staff. The disputes were complicated by the fact that the Ram Raja had obtained possession of the estate in 1927-28, but, his position being anything but secure, he could not settle these disputes. A congress committee enquired into the grievances of the tenants but failed to achieve a settlement. Relations, however, improved and the agitation subsided. The Ram Raja finally lost possession in 1931 through a decision of the Privy Council,



## CHAPTER VIII.

### OCCUPATIONS, MANUFACTURES AND TRADE.

**OCCUPATION.** By far the greater number of the inhabitants of Champaran are agriculturists. In 1901 the proportion was said to be 80.2 per cent of the population and at the time of the last settlement 90 per cent. That is probably about the proportion at the present time. The predominance of the agricultural element is very marked. This is partly due to the fact that until the recent economic depression it was usual for everyone, whatever his occupation, to invest any little money he saved in land. As all the mills in the district are seasonal, i.e. they work for a period only in the year, a whole-time industrial population is almost non-existent. There are a few mat and basket-makers and cotton-weavers scattered about the district, but these may often have other occupations besides.

**INDUSTRIES.** The proportion of persons dependent for their living on industries is very small indeed. The district has no important trade centres or manufacturing towns, and most of the artisans are fully occupied in supplying the simple needs of a rural people. The people live in scattered villages and each village constitutes to a large extent a self-sufficing industrial unit. The villagers grow their own food, grind their own corn and build their own houses and their rough agricultural implements are generally made and repaired by the village smith and carpenter. The manufacture of indigo, which was formerly the principal industry of the district, has now come to an end. The manufacture of sugar is the only remaining industry of any importance in the district. There are besides five rice-mills now working in the district, but they do not employ much labour. Three of them are in Raxaul, one at Adapur, one at Ghorasahan.

#### Sugar Industry.

The sugar industry has had very varying fortunes in this district. It was introduced by immigrants from Azamgarh and Gorakhpur more than one hundred years ago, and during the first half of the 19th century it was the most important industry in Champaran. Many of the old European indigo concerns were originally started as sugar factories, but about



1880 they gave up the manufacture of sugar when indigo became more profitable, and in the latter part of the last century, the industry was entirely in the hands of small refiners. These have suffered considerably from the competition of the large modern factories which have sprung up since 1905. The first of these was started at Siraha which at that time was a branch factory of the India Development Company whose headquarters were at Ottur in Muzaffarpur district. This factory came to an end years ago. In 1906 a factory was built at Pakri near Louria and one at Barah about the same time. These two are now flourishing, the former being the property of the Parsa concern and the latter of Messrs. Begg Sutherland & Co. At the present time sugar is booming, largely owing to the tremendous drop in the price of grain and many sugar factories are now being built in the district. Messrs. Begg Sutherland & Co. are building another large mill at Chainpatia, and Messrs. Birla Co. at Narkatiagunj. Narai-pur and Bagaha concerns are starting small mills and two more are to be built at Motihari and Majhaulia.

The Barah Factory employs approximately 559 persons, and its outturn last season was 188,423 maunds of sugar, 64,519 maunds molasses. Parsa employs about 442 persons and manufactured 78,345 maunds of sugar and 37,500 maunds of molasses last year.

The only other industries in the district are of no great importance. They are weaving and the making of pottery, brassware, mats, baskets, etc. Other Industries.

The trade of Champaran, both in exports and imports, is not very large. The principal exports are rice, linseed, sugar and cattle. The principal imports are cloth, coal, salt and kerosene oil. A considerable trade is carried on with Nepal as one of the main routes to Kathmandu runs through the district. The bulk of this trade passes through Raxaul which is on the Nepal border and is the railway junction of the Bengal and North-Western line and the Nepal line. Rice and paddy are the principal imports from Nepal and cotton piece-goods, salt, sugar and kerosene oil are the chief articles exported to Nepal. The railway is the main artery of commerce but the Sikrahna and Gandak rivers are also used as trade routes, and a good deal is carried by bullock carts. The chief river marts are at Gobindgunj, Barharwa, Manpur and Bagaha. The other trade centres are Bettiah, Motihari, Chainpatia, Narkatiagunj, Ramgarhwa and Madhuban. TRADE.



Fairs.

Much of the trade is carried on at the fairs held at various times and places in the district. Most of these fairs have a religious origin, and are religious as well as commercial in character. The largest is held at Bettiah in the *Dasahra Pujah* and lasts some 15 days. It is attended by thousands of people and is the greatest cattle fair of the year, and also a market for many other things. Smaller fairs are also held at that time at Madhuban, Peeprah and other places. At Lauriya Areraj, 16 miles west of Motihari, there is an image of Mahadeo in a deep dry well over which a large temple has been built. A large fair is held there in March and a smaller one in May. Another large fair is also held at that time at Lakhaura about 6 miles from Motihari. A fair is held at Tribeni in the extreme north-west of the district in February. As its name implies it is the spot where three rivers unite and for this reason is considered holy. It is also believed to be the scene of the beginning of the fight between Gaj and Garah the elephant and the crocodile which is recorded in the *Puranas*. This fair is attended by many Nepalese. There are also numerous other small fairs in various parts of the district.

Coins.

Besides the ordinary coins of the realm there are two unminted copper coins current in the district, i.e. the dumpy pice called *lohia* and Gorakhpuri pice. The latter are largely composed of copper and the former of iron. Both are called *dhehua* and are believed to be manufactured in Nepal and the United Provinces. They have no fixed value but vary according to the demand in the market and the seasons of the year. Generally 104 to 128 go to the rupee but in 1907 their value rose as high as 90 to the rupee. This increase in purchasing value was a great benefit in a year of abnormally high prices.

Land  
measure-  
ments.

The areas of fields and holdings are recorded in terms of local bighas as well as in acres. The local bigha is founded on a bamboo or *laggi* which varies in length from place to place. Each *laggi* is composed of a number of *haths* (cubits). The number varies in the district from 10 *haths* in the north of the Bettiah Estate to  $6\frac{3}{4}$  *haths* in the south of the Madhuban Estate, and the size of the bigha in terms of acres—an unchanging quantity—varies accordingly. All entries in the village *jamabandis* of the areas of holdings are in terms of bighas.

Measures.

The *hath* (18 inches) is also the most commonly used measurement for cloth, etc. but the *gaz* (yard) and *irch* are also used, also the *girah* (2½ inches) and *bitta* (9 inches).



The seer is the common dry and liquid measure of weightWeights. but it varies considerably in value as nearly every bazaar has its own scale of weight. The Government unit of calculation for measures of weight is the rupee, and in the villages the dumpy pice or *dhebua* is used. Approximately 22 *gandas* go to a seer in Motihari town, the *ganda* being equal to four pice.

into the cultivated area, in the last settlement, being only Rs. 2-10 as compared with Rs. 3-13 in 1881-82. The chief reasons for this low value are the comparative abundance of the population, the large area of waste land which has been available for cultivation, and the fact that the greater part of the district belongs to the British Raj, and a few other large proprietors. The area actually sown by the British Raj has increased considerably since the last settlement, as the Motihari, Farukh, and Tazim and Tazim's concerns were taken over by the British a few years ago and are now included in the district. In the last settlement, it was stated that in general there had been a tendency for land to pass from the possession of landlords into the hands of cultivators, the process being helped by the decline of prices which was formerly the chief crop cultivated by the landlord. There had also been a very considerable reduction in the rent-free area due partly to the decline of temporary rates, and partly to the reversion to the landlord of numerous gifts or grants, and in a very few cases to rent-free areas of the previous settlement being unnecessarily continued. There had been an increase in the non-cultivated area which is mainly forest. The total extent of the district in the last settlement was Rs. 31,07,607 and the produce-rental area was 68,381 acres which at an average valuation of the rent at Rs. 1 per acre represented a total of Rs. 6,80,112.

In the last settlement it was stated that there was an increased incidence of rent, the tendency to enhance had undoubtedly been restrained by the old rates, and the average of rent had been low in all the previous periods. The total result of settlement and the fact that the average of 1885 was that the main result of the last settlement had been an increase in the general incidence of rent had advanced from Rs. 1-13 to Rs. 2-10 per acre, while at the same time

Finance  
of  
rent



## CHAPTER IX.

### RENTS, WAGES AND PRICES.

**CASH RENTS.** RENTS on the whole are low in Champaran, the average rate per cultivated acre, in the last settlement, being only Rs. 2-4-0 as compared with Rs. 3-13-5 in Muzaffarpur and Rs. 4-5-4 in Saran. The chief reasons for this low rental are the comparative sparseness of the population, the large area of waste land which has been available for cultivation, and the fact that the greater part of the district belongs to the Bettiah Raj and a few other large proprietors. The area directly administered by the Bettiah Raj has increased considerably since the last settlement as the Motihari, Peeprah, Byreah, Rajpur and Turcauliah concerns were taken over by the Estate a few years ago and are now included in Raj circles. In the last settlement also it was stated that in general there had been a tendency for land to pass from the possession of landlords into the holdings of raiyats, the process being helped by the decline of indigo which was formerly the chief crop cultivated by the landlord. There had also been a very considerable reduction in the rent-free area due partly to the decline of temporary *jagirs*, and partly to the reversion to the landlord of numerous *birits* or grants, and in a very few cases to rent-free entries of the previous settlement being successfully contested. There had been an increase in the non-occupancy area which is mainly *diara*. The total cash rental of the district in the last settlement was Rs. 31,07,897 and the produce-rental area was 63,352 acres which at an average valuation of the rent at Rs. 6 per acre represents a total of Rs. 3,80,112.

Enhance-  
ment of  
rent.

In the last settlement it was stated that though there was increased incidence all round, the tendency to enhance had undoubtedly been restrained by the old record and the advance of rents had been less than at any previous period. The total result of contractual and judicial proceedings since 1898 was that the cash rental of the district had increased by 26 per cent, and the general incidence of rent had advanced from Rs. 1-13-9 to Rs. 2-4-0 per acre, while at the same time



there had been a decline in the produce-rental area, an increase in the cash-rented area, and a considerable transference of land from the *khas* cultivation of landlords to the holdings of raiyats. The following table shows the gradual increase in the total rent :—

Year.	Total rent of district.			
				Rs.
1790	...	...	...	5,55,615
1876	...	...	...	26,20,942
1893	...	...	...	30,73,556
1906	...	...	...	32,54,697
1922	...	...	...	34,88,009

The area held on produce rent is comparatively small, i.e. **PRODUCE RENTS.** 66,304 acres at the last settlement. The chief reason for this is that most of the district is owned by big zamindars who do not like the system, as in large properties it is costly and never works satisfactorily, because it requires constant supervision and entails the employment of an expensive staff. Also, the influence of indigo planters was against it as they were in favour of a stable rent system. There is a tendency for produce rents to be more prevalent in parts where the population is dense and where in consequence there is a keener competition for land but Champaran as a whole is comparatively sparsely populated and therefore the system is not general. The following are the various ways in which produce rents are paid in the district.

The commonest system is the division of the crop by **SYSTEMS OF PRODUCE RENTS.** bundles on the field, at the time of cutting, in equal shares between landlord and tenant. **Batai nisf.**

*Batai tikuli* which is rare, is a division of the crop by **Batai tikuli.** which the tenant gets two-thirds and the landlord one-third. The arrangement is usually resorted to where land has to be reclaimed, and sometimes where it is non-fertile and therefore unprofitable on other terms.

*Kankut nisf* also common, is division half and half by **Kankut nisf.** appraisement. It is the same as *danabandi nisf* of South Bihar. By this arrangement the crop is estimated on the field before it is reaped, and the value of the landlord's share is paid by the tenant either in grain or cash. Grain is usually given in payment of the current demand and cash in payment



of arrears. This system, which is not so common as *batai*, is generally more advantageous to the landlord because it does away with any pilfering and pressure can be brought to bear on the cultivator to secure a favourable estimate.

It is important to remember that in all divisions of crops the net produce and not the gross produce is divided. The net produce is what remains after certain deductions for labour, etc. have been made. In each case the details are noted in the record. The usual payment for reaping in Champaran is one bundle in eight.

Hunda.

This system in its original form *manhunda* meant a rent of a fixed number of maunds to be paid irrespective of the yield of the land. Common rates in North Champaran were 15—20 maunds a bigha ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 acres). The practice arose of paying in cash instead of grain, Re. 1 per maund being the conversion rate commonly adopted. The lands let out on *hunda* rents were often *bahas* lands which the landlord was not in a position to cultivate in a particular year. The *hunda* settlements were therefore in many cases understood to be purely temporary arrangements and to convey no permanent rights, in fact as stated at the last settlement to mean a temporary letting of lands on a very high cash rent. The raiyat, if he is a settled raiyat, has occupancy rights in such land by law. In practice he was a tenant at will. In the record *hunda* rents have been attested as cash rents if the original agreement was in terms of cash only, without any reference to any quantity of grain. If the settlement was on the basis of a number of maunds converted or otherwise the rent is shown as produce rent.

Tree rights.

At the time of the last settlement there was a great deal of trouble over the question of rights in trees. There are two kinds of trees in the district, *gayari* and *antrope*. The former belong entirely to the landlord and include those standing on *malik's* waste land, or on holdings surrendered to the landlord, or taken possession of by him when abandoned by raiyats. The *antrope* trees are those planted by the raiyat in his cash-rented holding. In these, the general custom is that the fruits belong entirely to the raiyat while the timber goes half to the raiyat and half to the landlord. With regard to cutting down trees on raiyati holdings the tenant usually takes the permission of the landlord. So his right is limited by custom.



The wages of skilled labour have risen very considerably in the last fifty or sixty years. The following table will show the rise in daily wages since 1870 :—

Trades.	1870.	1906.	1931.
Carpenter ..	2 annas	4—5 annas	10—12 annas.
Mason ..	2½—3½ annas	3½—4 annas	6—8 annas.
Blacksmith ..	2 annas	3—4 annas	8—12 annas.

The wages of unskilled labour have not risen so much. In 1874-75 the daily wages for coolies and agricultural labour were 2½ annas for a man, 1½ annas for a woman, and 1 anna for a boy. They now are 3 to 6 annas for a man, 3 annas for a woman, and about 1½ to 2 annas for a boy. The wages of agricultural labourers are often paid in kind, and are now 6 kutchra seers of grain per day for an adult. Also in villages, blacksmiths, carpenters, barbers, watchmen, washermen are sometimes paid in kind.

The price of food has risen considerably during the last forty years, as may be seen in the following table :—

*Average weight per rupee.*

Years.	Rice.	Wheat.	Barley.	Gram.	Maize.
	Srs. Ch.	Srs. Ch.	Srs. Ch.	Srs. Ch.	Srs. Ch.
1891—1895 .. ..	15 5½	13 7	..	17 9½	..
1896—1900 .. ..	13 8	12 4½	..	15 13	..
1901—1905 .. ..	15 3	13 14	..	18 2	..
1906—1910 .. ..	9 3	9 7	16 1	13 3	14 0
1911—1915 .. ..	8 8	10 8	16 15	13 9	15 6
1916—1920 .. ..	7 13	7 13	14 9	10 8	12 2
1921—1925 .. ..	7 6	6 0	13 1	9 4	10 0
1926—1930 .. ..	7 6	7 7	12 5	9 2	11 0

During the year 1931 prices dropped considerably and the price of common rice was 12 to 13 seers per rupee. This was largely due to general trade depression following the civil disobedience movement. At the present time, as in other years prices of food grains vary considerably before and after the harvests. That is to say prices are easy at the end of September when the *bhadai* crop is in the market, and remain fairly steady until December when the *aghani* rice crop is



reaped. After that they rise till about the middle of March and drop again after the *rabi* harvest and remain unsteady till September.

**Famine prices.**

		1873-74.	1896-97.	grains during the last two famines 1873-74 and 1896-97. The course of prices during the last famine was very different from that which it usually takes. In 1896 a sharp rise to $15\frac{1}{4}$ seers took place in the early part of August, owing to the serious break in the rains and to the reserve stocks having to
		Rs. a.	Rs. a.	
Common rice	{ Lowest price ..	20 0	11 4	
	{ Highest price ..	8 8	7 11	
	{ Average of year ..	12 9	8 14	
Wheat	{ Lowest price ..	16 0	9 4	
	{ Highest price ..	10 0	7 12	
	{ Average of year ..	12 0	8 11	
Barley	{ Lowest price ..	33 0	14 0	
	{ Highest price ..	13 0	9 8	
	{ Average of year ..	18 10	12 $2\frac{1}{2}$	
Maize	{ Lowest price ..	38 0	20 0	
	{ Highest price ..	13 0	8 0	
	{ Average of year ..	18 6	11 2	
Gram	{ Lowest price ..	26 0	12 0	
	{ Highest price ..	12 8	9 8	
	{ Average of year ..	15 10	10 12	

be trenced upon after the poor harvests of the previous year. After August prices rose steadily for several months with a sharp bound in the latter part of November, when all hope of rain for the *rabi* sowings had passed. The rise continued until the beginning of March when the mean price reached  $9\frac{15}{16}$  seers per rupee. With the advent of the spring crops and increasing importations, price began to fall in the middle of March, reaching their lowest level at the end of that month and of April, when the mean price was  $10\frac{3}{8}$  seers. After April there was a steady rise until after the middle of August, i.e. until the *bhadai* crops were assured, and for the last month of this period the mean price remained at  $9\frac{3}{4}$  seers per rupee. This was the highest level reached during the famine except once, in the end of December when the same level was attained. From the end of August prices began to fall, and at the end of September were at the same level as in the middle of October of the preceding year, viz.  $12\frac{1}{16}$  seers.

**Material condition.**

As has been stated elsewhere the material condition of the people is not good, largely owing to their inveterate habit of heavy expenditure on marriage and other ceremonies often entirely regardless of their ability to meet such expenditure. This in turn leads to borrowing money at exorbitant rates of interest often by means of a mortgage or advance loan on a standing crop. The raiyats of Champaran



should be better off than the raiyats of other districts in Tirhut as their holdings are larger, but they are not such good cultivators.

In Champaran more than any other district in Bihar the Indebted-landlord is in a very strong position as regards the control<sup>ness.</sup> of transfers. In fact, at the time of the land settlement it was reported that the right of an occupancy raiyat to transfer his holding without the consent of the landlord was seldom asserted and had never been proved. In spite of this fact the area under mortgages at that time was reported to be 104,552 acres, of which 58 per cent was held by money-lenders, and 40,733 acres were sold, of which 46.2 per cent went to money-lenders. In ten years 121,978 acres or 8 per cent of the area held by raiyats had been transferred as against  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent in the previous report. To a certain extent this growing influence of the money-lender has perhaps been checked by the advance of co-operative banks. There is the Central Co-operative Bank, Limited, at Motihari and the National Central Co-operative Bank, Limited, at Bettiah.

The Co-operative Societies Act was passed on the 25th March 1904 and almost immediately a start was made. In the early stages Mr. J. E. Rutherford, Manager of the Bettiah Estate, as honorary organizer, rendered valuable services. A few years later Mr. Holttum of Loheriah and Mr. Gordon of Murla organized considerable extensions in the Bettiah and Sadr subdivisions, while later still the Rev. Mr. Hodge of Motihari was the life and soul of the movement in that area until he left early in 1930. In addition especially in the early stages Government officials rendered valuable assistance.

In 1904-05 there were 5 societies with 50 members and in 1905-06 4 societies with 101 members and a working capital of Rs. 3,086. In 1907-08 there were 19 societies with 432 members and a working capital of Rs. 4,960 and one urban society with 83 members and a working capital of Rs. 6,445. In 1914-15 there was a large expansion from 25 societies to 49 societies with 1,147 members and a working capital of Rs. 64,457. Later the Motihari Central Co-operative Bank, Limited, and the Bettiah National Co-operative Bank, Limited, were registered in 1919 and 1921, respectively.



At the end of 1930 the Motihari Bank had a working capital of Rs. 4,99,749 as compared with Rs. 5,15,964 at the end of 1929. During 1930 a sum of Rs. 57,905 was given as loans to societies, Rs. 2,98,151 were received from loans and deposits repaid by societies and Rs. 3,82,687 loans remained due by societies. The Bank borrowed at 4 to 6 per cent and loans were granted at 10 and 11 per cent.

During the year there were 201 societies affiliated to the Bank and in addition 14 societies were under liquidation. **Only 6 societies were classified A (Model) and 45B (Good),** of the rest 133 were classified C or average. The following figures show the working of the 192 agricultural societies. Loans made to individuals during the year Rs. 53,812, repaid by individuals Rs. 1,08,258. Loans due by individuals Rs. 3,43,363, of which Rs. 1,07,347 is overdue. The usual rate of interest charged to individuals was 14 per cent and 15½ per cent.

The Bettiah Bank had in 1930 a working capital of Rs. 1,99,646. During the year Rs. 14,649 was given out as loans to societies, Rs. 23,071 was received from societies and Rs. 1,42,644 was the total due from societies. The Bank borrowed at 4 per cent to 8 per cent and lent at 10½ per cent.

There were 100 societies affiliated to the Bank, of which 4 were classified A, 18 B and 58 C and the rest below this class. In 1931 13 of these societies were under liquidation; none were classified A and only 7B.

The following figures show the working of the 109 agricultural societies consisting of 1,941 members. Rs. 13,560 was loaned to individuals at 12½ per cent, Rs. 23,679 was received from individuals, Rs. 1,82,008 was due from individuals, of which Rs. 64,193 was overdue.

The Bettiah Central (Christian) Bank was opened in 1918 through the efforts of Rev. Father Felix. The Bettiah Raj gave financial assistance to the Bank as the Raj tenants were the chief beneficiaries. The Bank maintained its reputation for efficiency of management and sound progress till 1923 but later it heavily overfinanced its societies and was badly mismanaged and ceased working in 1928. The non-Christian societies were amalgamated with the Bettiah National Central Bank, the Bettiah Mission met the



liabilities of the Christian societies which were the worst while a few of the societies were liquidated. The Bank was wound up in December 1929 without any loss although it was apprehended that it would land its creditors in huge losses.

The expansion of co-operative credit has been rapid in the last 20 years and undoubtedly has been of great benefit to many villages. The present time, however, is somewhat critical. Owing to the depression in agriculture due to the great fall in prices, the banks are finding it extremely difficult to realize their loans and thereby finance cultivators in their time of need. The report of Mr. Ansorge, I.C.S., Registrar of Co-operative Societies, for 1930, disclosed many weaknesses of the past administration of the banks and societies of the province. It is to be hoped that the recent commission presided over by Mr. Hubback, the present Commissioner of the Chota Nagpur Division, will open the way to increased efficiency and progress.



## CHAMPARAN.

### CHAPTER X.

#### MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.

DEVELOP-  
MENT OF  
COMMUNICA-  
TIONS.

Roads.

MORE than a century ago Champaran had not a single road worthy of the name. In 1800 the Collector of Saran (which at that time included Champaran) reported that as far as his knowledge and enquiries extended there were no roads in the district except one in Saran. Fair-weather tracks undoubtedly existed but no roads fit for cart traffic. In the next thirty years some good military roads were made during the Nepal War, and lines of communication were established between the cantonments along the frontier. In 1830 the Collector reported that the road from Sattar Ghat via Dhaka to the cantonment at Mallai in the Muzaffarpur district was in a tolerable state of repair as also were the roads from the cantonments on the Nepal boundary between Tirhut and Gorakhpur. He added that there were two other good roads, the one from Bettiah to Tribeni and the other from Bettiah to Ramnagar for which Champaran was indebted to a visit from the Governor-General. He pointed out that there were numerous old roads from north to south and from east to west but until they were repaired and opened for "land carriage" very little trade could be carried on. The little trade that existed was mainly carried on by the little Gandak which communicated with the Ganges.

About this time a great change was effected by the enterprise of the indigo and sugar planters to whom good lines of communication were an absolute necessity. In the Bengal and Agra Guide and Gazetteer of 1841 it is stated—"In Champaran the roads are excellent and kept in good and substantial repair by the indigo planters at their own expense. From Mehshi the most eastern part of Champaran to within a few kos of Bettiah, a distance of nearly 50 miles the roads are excellent". The other roads at that time were not so good, the road leading to Sattar Ghat on the Gandak, which was the high road to Champaran being described as hardly passable for five or six months in the year. The road from Bagaha to Bettiah was in parts merely a grass pathway and



the cross roads from one village to another were wholly neglected except in a few instances where they were repaired by zamindars. Gradually but surely the roads were improved and in 1876 there were 26 roads with a total length of 438 miles. By 1906 the total mileage had more than doubled and excluding village tracks it was 1,081 miles. There are now 91½ miles of metalled roads and 2,264½ miles unmetalled roads, total 2,356 miles of road in the district. Of these 59 miles metalled roads and 2,241 miles unmetalled roads are maintained by the district and the local boards. The remainder are kept up mainly by the municipalities. The proportion of metalled roads is very small. This is due to the fact that good road metal is not available in most of the district and the resources of the district board are not sufficient for the construction and maintenance of expensive roads. The area to be dealt with is large and with the continual increase of motor traffic particularly motor buses, plying regularly for hire, it is difficult to maintain the roads in good condition. The most important roads are those which lead from the Nepal border to the banks of the Gandak.

The Tirhut State Railway, the first railway in the district, was extended into Champaran from Muzaffarpur in the year 1883, and was the only line in the district in the famine of 1897. At that time it ended at Bettiah, nearly 50 miles from the foot of the hills and about 65 miles from the north-western extremity of the district. Since that time the management of this line has been taken over by the Bengal and North-Western Railway Company and this line has been extended beyond Bettiah to Bhikhna Thori on the Nepal border, thus traversing the district completely from south to north. The fifteen stations in the district on this line beginning from the south are Mehsi, Barah Chakia, Peeprah, Jiudhara, Motihari, Semra, Sugauli, Majhaulia, Bettiah, Chainpatia, Sathi, Narkatiagunj, Amolwa, Gaunaha and Bhikna Thori. There is also a short line running due north from Segauli to Raxaul with one intermediate station at Ramgarhwa. This line connects with the Nepal light railway at Raxaul which is on the frontier. There is a third line which runs from Bagaha to Bairagnia, traversing the whole of the north of the district and connecting with the Muzaffarpur line at Narkatiagunj and the Segauli line at Raxaul. The stations on this line going from east to west are Kundwa, Ghorasahan or Kotwa, Chauradano, Adapur, Raxaul, Bhelwa, Sikta, Gokhula,



Narkatiagunj, Harinagar, Bhairogunj, Khairpokhar and Bagaha. This line is most valuable for carrying the grain traffic of Nepal and north Champaran. The collapse of the railway bridge at Bagaha in 1924 has cut the railway communications between the north of the district and Gorakhpur.

Besides these lines there is a short light railway about ten miles long, belonging to Pakri Sugar Factory. It was recently built and is used only for the transport of sugarcane.

**Ferries.**

There are very few bridges in the district and therefore ferries are numerous and carry much traffic. The most important are those on the big Gandak at Bagaha and Gobindgunj, and on the Sikrahna at Segauli.

**WATER  
COMMUNICA-  
TIONS.**

Although the district is intersected by many rivers, only three are navigable—the Great Gandak, the Sikrahna, and the Bagmati. The other rivers are little more than hill-streams which nearly or entirely dry up in the hot weather. The Great Gandak is navigable by boats of 1,000 maunds burthen and is used by country boats carrying timber, grain, etc. The Bagmati is navigable by boats of 400 to 500 maunds burthen and the Sikrahna by boats of from 200 to 300 maunds burthen in the southern portion of their courses.

**POSTAL  
COMMUNICA-  
TIONS.**

There are 307½ miles of postal communication by road in the district and 175 miles by rail. There are 1 head office, 21 sub-offices and 29 branch offices, i.e. a total of 51 offices as against the total of 52 offices in 1907. The number of telegraph offices has increased as there were only 10 in 1907 and there are now 18. There are two at Motihari, and the remaining sixteen are at Bagaha, Bara Chakia, Bettiah, Chainpattia, Dhaka, Gobindgunj, Kesaria, Lauriya, Mehsi, Narkatiagunj, Rajpore, Ramgarhwa, Ramnagar, Raxaul, Segauli and Turkaulia. The total sum paid by money-order in the district during the year 1930-31 was Rs. 18,11,101-5-0 and the total sum issued by money-order in the same year was Rs. 21,97,044-12-9. The total sum deposited in the savings bank was Rs. 5,19,028 and the total sum withdrawn from savings bank accounts was Rs. 5,02,959-9-3. The number of messages sent from the head office in the year was 4,302 and the number delivered was 5,194. The total number of unregistered letter mail articles delivered from the head office was 434,980 during the year 1930-31.

**Conclusion.**

The present existing communications in the district are really sufficient for the traffic of goods but there is a lack of



good motor roads. The only part of the district which may be said to suffer from want of communications is Dhanaha which lies west of the Great Gandak river and therefore since 1924, when the Bagaha railway bridge collapsed in a flood has been cut off by the river from the railway. It is also possible that in the near future, owing to the number of new sugar mills now under construction, there may be some difficulty in carrying the very heavy sugarcane traffic either by rail or road.



## CHAPTER XI.

## LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

REVENUE  
DIVISIONS.

FOR the purposes of revenue administration the district is divided into three parganas or fiscal divisions, known as Mehsi, Simraon and Majhawa. Parganas Mehsi and Simraon are almost co-extensive with thanas Madhuban and Dhaka, respectively, and cover a long narrow strip of land, running from the confines of Nepal on the north to the borders of Tirhut on the south, and separated from the latter on the east by the Baghmata and from the neighbouring pargana of Majhawa on the west by the Tiar and Burh Gandak rivers. In density of population, fertility of soil, abundance of rice-fields, and absence of uncultivated wastes, they are similar to the adjoining tract of Tirhut. These two parganas account for the area of only two rather small thanas, and the rest of the district is contained in the immense pargana of Majhawa; its northern and north-western boundaries march with Nepal and the Gandak separates it from Raj Butwal in that State and from the districts of Gorakhpur and Saran on the south-west and south. It extends over an area of nearly  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million acres, and includes the Bettiah Raj, the Ramnagar Estate and the greater part of the Madhuban Estate. This enormous pargana can be divided into portions marked by a different degree of fertility; the portion on the east comprises the thanas of Adapur, Motihari, Kesariya, Gobindgunj and Bettiah with small portions of Bagaha and Shikarpur, while the greater portion of the two extensive thanas last named comprise the portion to the west. The parganas are divided into 32 *tappas* or minor divisions, of which a list is given below:—

<i>Majhawa pargana.</i>	<i>Majhawa pargana—</i> contd.	<i>Majhawa pargana—</i> contd.
Bahas.	Chanki.	Duho Suho.
Balthar.	Chigwan Batsara.	Gopala.
Balua Gondauli.	Chigwan Nisf.	Harnatanr.
Belwa.	Daulata.	Jafarabad.
Bhabta.	Deoraj.	Jamhauli.



<i>Majhawa pargana—</i> contd.	<i>Majhawa pargana—</i> concl'd.	<i>Mehsi pargana—</i> concl'd.
Khada.	Ramgir.	Haveli.
Madhwal.	Sakhwa.	Salempur Hadia-
Mando.	Sathi.	bad.
Manpur Chaudand.	Sonwal.	Sirauna.
Olah.	Sugaon.	<i>Simraon pargana.</i>
Patjirwa.	<i>Mehsi pargana.</i>	Nonaur.
Rajpur Sihoria.	Harihara.	

The records of the earlier settlements made in Champaran before it came into the possession of the British, are not sufficiently detailed to give any clear idea of its progress. In the settlement made by *Todar Mal*, in the time of the Emperor Akbar, 99,424 acres or 155 square miles are said to have been assessed to a revenue of Rs. 1,37,835; but it seems uncertain that this area included even all the cultivated land of the district, and it is probable that isolated stretches of cultivation escaped assessment. However this may be, it is noticeable that the assessment was based on the high incidence of Re. 1-6-0 per acre. About a century later the revenue was raised to Rs. 2,10,150 by an assessment made in 1685 by Shah Jahan in the reign of Aurangzeb; but in 1750 it was reduced by nearly Rs. 10,000 by Ali Vardi Khan. It is difficult to ascertain what the actually assessed revenue of the district was when the British took it over in 1765, but it appears to have stood at about Rs. 2 lakhs.

At this time Sarkar Champaran was in the possession of the Bettiah Raj family, the head of which, Raja Jugal Keshwar Singh, fell into arrears of revenue and defied the authority of the British Government. The estate was thereon seized and brought under the direct management of the East India Company, and annual settlements were made until 1772; but the revenue dwindled year by year until it was only Rs. 1,39,389 in 1773, i.e. very little more than the amount assessed by *Todar Mal* two centuries before. This state of affairs was due not only to the troubles with the Bettiah Raj but also to the famine of 1770. According to Hamilton's description of Hindostan (1820) "Sarkar Champaran or Bettiah suffered severely during the great famine of 1770, when almost half the inhabitants are supposed to have perished. Besides this, the zamindars of Champaran having for many years been deprived of their lands, which were leased to ignorant and rapacious farmers



of the revenue, they experienced such oppression that the majority of the population which survived the famine were obliged to abscond, leaving the country almost a desert. Since that melancholy epoch the zamindars have been re-established by the decennial settlement, many of the ancient inhabitants have returned, and cultivation has been prosecuted."

Permanent  
settlement.

In the meantime various disastrous experiments in land revenue administration had been embarked upon. In 1772 a quinquennial settlement under the control of European supervisors was attempted but it proved a failure. Annual settlements were then made with farmers and were also largely unsuccessful; and in 1786 the Directors, tired of these fruitless experiments, expressed a desire for a durable assessment on the basis of actual collections for a term of years. The decennial settlement of 1790 was the result. This settlement was made with zamindars, farmers being introduced only in case of recusancy; and the revenue assessed was settled at Rs. 3,98,253 or, excluding pargana Babra, which was transferred to Tirhut in 1865, at Rs. 3,51,427. When this settlement was concluded, Champaran was divided into six estates, the largest of which comprised the two parganas of Majhawa and Simraon and was charged with a revenue of over Rs. 2 lakhs, while the smallest consisted of one village, Harpur Rai, assessed at Rs. 300. Majhawa and Simraon were held by Bir-Keshwar Singh of the Bettiah Raj, Mehsi and Babra with a revenue of Rs. 1,25,350 by the Sheohar Raj family, tappa Duho Suho by the founder of the Madhuban family and tappas Ramgir, Jamhauli and Chigwan by the Ramnagar Raja. In other words, four of the proprietors were the founders of the four great families of the district.

At the permanent settlement, concluded three years later, in 1793, this settlement, with some slight modifications, was confirmed in perpetuity, the revenue assessed being Rs. 3,85,587. Its result was not, as elsewhere in Bengal, to secure in possession men who had been mere rent collectors, but to recognize as proprietors the local Rajas, whose ancestors had for generations past exercised the powers of semi-independent chiefs ruling over a large extent of territory.

Growth of  
revenue and  
estates.

During the next century the demand of land revenue was largely increased owing to the resumption between 1834 and



1841 of lands held without payment of revenue under invalid titles; and at the settlement concluded in 1899 the revenue of the district was Rs. 5,15,803 assessed upon a cultivated area of 1,447,874 acres. Since that time it has fallen slightly, the demand at the conclusion of the Revisional Survey being Rs. 5,15,135 assessed upon a cultivated area of 1,473,545 acres including current fallow. In 1929-30 the demand was Rs. 5,16,036. The number of revenue-paying estates borne on the revenue roll rose from 879 in 1870-71 to 1,101 in 1888-89, to 1,260 in 1905-06, to 1,349 in 1916-17. In 1929-30 there were 1,449 permanently-settled estates, 6 temporarily-settled estates including Government estates leased to farmers and three estates held by Government. The increase in the number of estates since the permanent settlement is due partly to the disintegration of the Sheohar Estate, which fell into arrears at the close of the 18th century and was sold up from time to time in small parcels, until it was left with only one-fourth of its former area: it is partly due to the addition of resumed estates to the revenue roll and partly due to partitions, which have never been very numerous.

Comparing the incidence of land revenue with what it was 300 years ago in Akbar's time, we find that it had decreased from Rs. 1-6-0 to annas 3-7 per acre in 1917-18. At that time Mr. Sweeny estimated the assets at the very lowest at Rs. 40,00,000, the revenue being Rs. 5,15,135. Since then the assets have undoubtedly increased, though accurate figures are not available. Champaran is, therefore, among the lightest assessed districts in the province.

The first survey undertaken in Champaran was the revenue survey of 1845, the object of which was to map out the boundaries of villages and estates, in order to put a stop to the constant boundary disputes, which formed a serious administrative difficulty. This was followed in 1865 by a *diara* survey carried out for the purpose of assessing to revenue all alluvial formations outside the area of the permanently-settled estates as mapped at the time of the revenue survey. In this survey the riparian lands on the Gandak were measured, the total area surveyed being 548 square miles; and the result was that Rs. 700 were added to the revenue roll.

SURVEYS  
AND  
SETTLEMENTS.

Between the years 1892 and 1899 the whole district with the exception of a hilly tract in the north was cadastrally



surveyed on the scale 16 inches to the mile, and 400,592 holdings with an average size of 5.19 acres and 2,807,976 plots with an average size of 0.74 acre were recorded. A complete record-of-rights was also prepared for the whole district. This work was carried out under the supervision of Mr. (now Sir Charles) Stevenson-Moore, whose report is very interesting. This cadastral survey, as it is popularly called, enormously strengthened the position of the cultivators and did much to protect them in the peaceful occupations of their holdings and from oppressive enhancement of their rents.

Between the years 1913 and 1919 the cadastral survey and the settlement was completely revised under the supervision of Mr. Sweeny whose report published in 1922 is invaluable to the student of the more recent history of Champaran. Revision is really a misnomer for the work entailed, the preparation of an entirely new and up-to-date record. By 1919 the number of plots recorded had increased by 22 per cent to 3,437,531 and the average size of the plot had decreased to .60 acre. No accurate figures are available to show the number of raiyats and the average size of a raiyati holding as figures were compiled for *khatians*, separate *khatians* being compiled for cash-rented and produce-rented land and for lands held in separate villages. The increase in the number of plots and the decrease in the average area undoubtedly indicates that in the interval between the two settlements there had been a general tendency towards subdivision of holdings and consequent decrease in the average size of the holdings.

#### ESTATES.

Champaran is a district owned mainly by a few big proprietors, with a small number of petty revenue-free properties, and with but few subordinate tenures. The disintegration of property, which is such a marked feature in Muzaffarpur, has not proceeded to any great extent in this district, and the greater part is still held by three estates—the Bettiah Raj, the Madhuban Estate and the Ramnagar Raj. Petty proprietors are fairly numerous in the Madhuban, Dhaka and Kesariya thanas, but everywhere else the Bettiah Raj and a few big zamindars predominate. The Bettiah Estate now pays Rs. 3,94,328 as land revenue and Rs. 2,06,182 as cess while its annual cash rental demand is Rs. 25,97,339. The annual revenue demands of the Madhuban and Ramnagar estates are Rs. 22,385 and Rs. 5,546-3-0, respectively. Though the area of Champaran is 3,531 square miles, there are only



1,485 estates borne on the revenue roll and there are 109 revenue-free estates. Of these 1,485 estates all are permanently-settled except six temporarily-settled and three under direct management. The six temporarily-settled estates which are all very small properties are Malkhauli Patkhauli in *tappa* Chigwan Batsara, Charki *diara* and Khutwania in *tappa* Patjirwa, Gopalpur Masanthan in *tappa* Daulata, Remnagar Panditwa in *tappa* Patjirwa and Ghormarwa in *tappa* Manpur. The estate last named was formerly the only Government estate in the district, held by Government since 1831, but has since been in lease to the Bettiah Raj. The annual demand of these six estates is Rs. 983.

There are only three very small Government estates under direct management. Katkenwa and Dharhari estates were originally Government camping grounds being unconditional gifts from the Madhuban Estate. In 1916 these camping grounds, which are adjacent, were found to have been cultivated by tenants who paid no rent. They were consequently brought on the revenue roll and rents are now collected by the Collectorate staff, the annual demand of both being Rs. 162-3-10. The third estate is Narhapanapur. This estate originally in Muzaffarpur district was purchased by Government in 1909. It diluviated and was for some years included in the parent estate of the same name in Champaran. Proceedings were taken to resume the estate under Act IX of 1847 and in 1928 orders were passed establishing the estate as a temporarily-settled estate. The annual demand is now Rs. 331-6-0.

Nearly the whole of the area comprised within the different estates is in the occupation of tenants. The area held as proprietors' *zirat* or private land is inconsiderable amounting only to 0.3 per cent of the total occupied area. In 1919 only 24,361 acres or 1.55 per cent of the area was in the direct cultivation of proprietors for in Champaran so large a proportion of the district is included in the big estates that the landlords have no incentive to reserve land for their own cultivation.

A large number of the tenures found in the district are TENURES. held by concerns, whose business was previously the cultivation and manufacture of indigo. These concerns were in 1907 in possession of 357,000 acres or 17.17 per cent of the district area as permanent tenure-holders (*mukarraridars*) and of



524,000 acres or 25.20 per cent as temporary tenure-holders or *thikadars*, 65,000 acres were also held by indigo concerns as under tenure-holders. At that time indigo factories held  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of the occupied area in direct occupation. The decline of indigo has been described in a previous chapter and in 1919 the percentage of land in direct possession of tenure-holders had dropped to 5.35 per cent, the acreage being 84,092 as compared with 117,066. Since 1919 the area in possession of tenure-holders has greatly decreased. The following concerns have sold out to the Bettiah Estate between the years 1926 and 1929 :—

	<i>Bakasht</i> area.	RAIYATI AREA.		Raiyati rent. Rs. a. p.
		<i>Nagdi.</i>	<i>Bhaoli.</i>	
Turkaulia ..	3,179.25	76,675.20	1,064.78	2,16,738 0 9
Pipra ..	1,527.73	40,648.74	518.96	1,16,789 15 6
Motihari ..	1,002.28	35,115.14	2,082.71	1,36,772 13 0
Bairia ..	821.80	8,131.45	6.86	15,513 13 11
Rajpur ..	217.29	23,077.81	325.50	37,350 12 6

Of the *bakasht* area a large percentage has been settled with tenants. In addition since indigo declined the area directly cultivated by *mukarraridars* and *thikadars* has decreased, as they found it more advantageous to settle outlying *bakasht* land with tenants rather than cultivate directly. There are, however, no accurate figures to show the percentage of land in direct cultivation of proprietors and tenure-holders as at present.

#### TENANTS.

Raiyats holding at fixed rates (*sharahmoyan*) are very few in number and account for only 18,876 acres or 1.25 per cent of the occupied area. The average size of these holdings, however, is large, viz. 6.3 acres. These figures are those recorded at the revisional settlement and represent a fall from 26,803 acres in the previous settlement due to loss of status by transfer, subdivision or amalgamation and consequent reassessment. In a few cases also the status recorded in the previous record was proved to be wrong and the status of settled raiyat was substituted.

Settled or occupancy raiyats held 1,358,382 acres or 86.90 of the occupied area. Non-occupancy raiyats held 52,054 acres or 3.35 per cent of the occupied area as compared



with 38,624 acres or 3.10 per cent in 1899. The area is mainly *diara* in which the position of the raiyat had become stronger than before. There was a large decrease on rent-free holdings from 34,227 acres a percentage of 2.10 in 1899 to 20,589 or a percentage of 1.30 in 1918. This fall was due partly to the decline of temporary *jagirs*, partly to the reversion to the landlords of numerous *birits* or grants, and in a very few cases to rent-free entries of the previous settlement being successfully contested.



## CHAMPARAN.

## CHAPTER XII.

## GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

ADMINIS-  
TRATIVE  
STAFF.

FOR administrative purposes the district is divided into two subdivisions, Sadr and Bettiah. At the headquarters of the district, Motihari, the District Magistrate and Collector, who is in charge of the whole district, is assisted by a staff of Deputy Magistrates and Deputy Collectors including the Sub-divisional Officer, Sadr and generally one or two Sub-Deputy Collectors and also an Excise Superintendent with his staff. The sanctioned staff is 3 first-class Deputy Magistrates and 2 Deputy Magistrates with either second or third-class powers, but with the increase of work in recent years an extra first-class Magistrate is almost invariably posted to Motihari and usually one or more Sub-Deputy Magistrates with second or third-class powers.

The Subdivisional Officer at Bettiah has been assisted by an experienced Sub-Deputy Collector for many years. For the last two years owing to increased work due to political agitation and dacoities a Deputy Collector has also been posted to Bettiah.

From April 1932 the certificate work of the Bettiah subdivision, which up till now has been done at Motihari, will be transferred to Bettiah and a Deputy Collector will be posted to Bettiah in addition to the Subdivisional Officer and the Sub-Deputy Collector. The certificate work of the district is heavy for not only are the Bettiah Estate rents realized by the procedure when necessary but the certificate procedure under section 158-A has been granted to European concerns who hold tenures under the Bettiah Estate.

Since the separation of the Irrigation and Roads and Buildings branches of the Public Works Department, an Executive Engineer of the Irrigation Branch has been posted at Motihari. With the help of Subdivisional Officers and their staffs at Ramnagar, Maniari and Dhaka, he supervises the Champaran Embankment and the Irrigation from the Tribeni, Dhaka and Teur canals. Since 1923 the collection of the



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revenue of these canals has been transferred to the Deputy Collector, Son Circle, at Arrah. A Subdivisional Officer of the Roads and Buildings Branch is stationed at Motihari who works under the Executive Engineer of Muzaffarpur. The other local officers are the Superintendent of Police, the Civil Surgeon who is also in charge of the district jail, the District Engineer who is an officer of the district board but also performs important duties of a somewhat indefinite nature as Embankment Engineer, and a Subordinate Judge who is also Assistant Sessions Judge.

The Bettiah Estate is the only estate under the Court of Wards, a short description of which will be given later in the gazetteer proper.

The revenue under the main heads rose from Rs. 8,88,000 REVENUE. in 1880-81 (when the income-tax had not been imposed) to Rs. 10,31,000 in 1890-91 and to Rs. 10,84,000 in 1900-01, to about Rs. 14 lakhs in 1910-11 and Rs. 16,67,138 in 1920-21 when the demand from land revenue was Rs. 5,15,111, from Excise Rs. 5,12,339, from Cess Rs. 2,99,474, from Stamps Rs. 2,89,879 and from Registration Rs. 50,335. In 1929-30 the last of the normal and prosperous years the revenue was Rs. 19,56,482, the main heads of which were Rs. 5,16,036 from land revenue, Rs. 5,95,767 from Excise, Rs. 3,19,572 from Cess, Rs. 4,17,665 from Stamps, and Rs. 1,07,442 from Registration.

The Excise revenue decreased from Rs. 2,16,496 in Excise. 1892-93 to Rs. 2,13,300 in 1900-01. Since that year up to the year 1929-30 there has, on the whole, been a steady growth in the receipts. In 1904-05 it amounted to Rs. 2,82,835. In 1905-06 there was a further increase to Rs. 3,08,187. In 1910-11 the total revenue was Rs. 4,71,194. In the next 10 years the revenue did not increase materially varying from Rs. 5,12,932 in 1911-12 to Rs. 3,50,878 in 1914-15. In 1921-22 there was a fall from Rs. 5,12,339 in the previous year to Rs. 4,34,362 which may be attributed to the non-co-operation campaign of the period. The revenue recovered in the next year, and throughout the subsequent years gradually increased up till 1929-30 when it was Rs. 5,95,767. In 1930-31 there was a big drop to Rs. 3,88,323 owing to the civil disobedience campaign and subsequent economic depression and a further fall is expected during the current year 1931-32 mainly owing to economic conditions.



Like all the districts in the Tirhut Division the incidence of taxation per head of population is low compared to other parts of the province. In Champaran in 1929-30 when the revenue reached its maximum the incidence per head of population was recorded as Rs. 0.30. This calculation is based on the census figures of 1921 and the figures of the present census (1931) show that the incidence is really even lower. The average incidence in the Patna Division is .75, in the Bhagalpur Division 0.49, in the Orissa Division .55, and in the Chota Nagpur Division .78, the highest in the province being Singhbhum 1.17.

In 1929-30 the main heads of receipt was country spirit Rs. 2,55,996, *Ganja* Rs. 2,05,695, *Tari* Rs. 1,06,304 and Opium Rs. 24,523. Of these the *tari* revenue shows the largest increase in the last 20 years being only Rs. 33,063 in 1910-11. Opium proportionately shows an even larger rise, the 1910-11 figure being only Rs. 3,740.

A special staff is employed in the district to prevent smuggling on the borders of Nepal. This staff was previously under the direct control of the Excise Deputy Commissioner, but in 1926 it was placed under the control of the Excise Superintendent. In 1924 the sliding scale system was introduced for country spirit shops which had previously been settled by auction. The change has been a success for it has resulted in a more stable income being earned by the vendors and malpractices too have decreased. The tree-tax system will be introduced in the thanas bordering on the Muzaffarpur district from April 1932 which, it is hoped, will result in a more stable *tari* revenue.

In Champaran in 1929-30 there were 59 country spirit shops, 217 *tari* shops and 54 *ganja* shops. The administration of Excise is complicated by the fact that country spirit and *ganja* are sold at much cheaper rates in Nepal. Except with the previous sanction of the local Government no shops for the retail sale of exciseable articles except *tari* are licensed within two miles of the Nepal border. The Nepal Darbar has also agreed not to license any excise shop on their side of the border except five country spirit and *ganja* shops at Birganj bazar (opposite to Raxaul). In spite of this it has been found necessary to arrange for specially cheap rates in the case of country spirit and *ganja* in the district shops close to the border.



The total expenditure in 1929-30 in the collection of revenue was Rs. 40,674.

Road and Public Works cesses are, as usual, levied at the rate of one anna in the rupee. The demand after the valuation in 1905-06 was Rs. 1,85,145 and after the last revaluation of 1920-21 Rs. 2,99,474-11-0. The figure in 1929-30 was Rs. 3,19,572. In recent years the forest areas in the Bettiah and Ramnagar Estates have been assessed annually under section 72 of the Act.

Cesses are payable by 1,485 revenue-paying estates and 109 revenue-free estates which are all very small. The highest assessment is that of the Bettiah Estate which pays Rs. 2,06,182.

The revenue from Stamps comes next to the heads noted above. The receipts from this source fell from Rs. 1,39,236 in 1896-97 to Rs. 1,18,364 in 1905-06. This decrease, however, was fictitious being due to the retransfer of the Subordinate Judge's Court to Saran where all the important civil works were carried on. Since that date the increase has been gradual though, as one might expect, there have been variations from year to year. The receipts rose to its highest point in 1929-30 when the receipts from judicial stamps reached the figure Rs. 2,67,227 and under the head non-judicial Rs. 1,50,438. These figures in 1930-31 dropped to Rs. 2,40,581 and Rs. 1,21,521, respectively, the fall being partly due to the civil disobedience campaign, and probably mainly to the economic depression.

In 1906 there were four registration offices—at Motihari, Bettiah, Dhaka and Kesariya. In 1913 owing to the abnormal increase in the number of leases mainly in indigo *sattas* granted by indigo factories to their tenants 10 temporary joint offices were opened. These in the next year 1914 were reduced to 6. The total number of registrations in 1910 was 15,585 while in 1913 the figures were 41,811. In 1915, after the closing of the temporary offices, the figure was 24,784. There was an abnormal rise in 1919 from 28,953 in the previous year to 42,221, which remained the highest figure till 1927 when it became 48,324. In 1929 the number of registrations reached 51,859 and the receipts rose to Rs. 1,07,442. In 1931 owing to the economic conditions the registrations had dropped to 44,293 and the receipts to Rs. 76,013. There are now offices at Motihari, Dhaka,



Kesariya and Chauradano in the Sadr subdivision and at Bettiah, Shikarpur in the Bettiah subdivision, while an experimental office opened at Bagaha in April 1930 is likely to be made permanent.

**Income-tax.**

Since the year 1923 the tax has been transferred to the Central Government under the supervision of a Board of Inland Revenue. An income-tax officer is stationed at Motihari who is assisted by an inspector and is under the Commissioner of Income-tax. The annual demand at present is Rs. 2,04,528 from income-tax and Rs. 23,129 from super-tax.

**ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.**

Criminal justice is administered by the District and Sessions Judge of Muzaffarpur, who holds a court of sessions at Motihari for the trial of the more serious cases committed from Champaran by the Assistant Sessions Judge stationed at Motihari who is empowered to pass sentences of transportation and imprisonment up to 7 years, and by the District Magistrate and the magistrates subordinate to him. Benches of honorary magistrates and honorary magistrates with single sitting powers are also appointed. At present there is one honorary magistrate at Bettiah with second-class powers and one honorary magistrate at Motihari with third-class powers. Periodically also an Assistant Magistrate is posted to Motihari who is vested with powers of a magistrate of the third and second-class as his training advances.

**Civil justice.**

In 1906 the district was included within the limits of the Muzaffarpur Sessions Division and placed under the jurisdiction of the District Judge of Muzaffarpur. The civil courts in the district are that of the Subordinate Judge at Motihari and those of the Munsifs stationed at Motihari and Bettiah. The civil litigation in the district is light at present. In the court of the Subordinate Judge, who tries original cases above the value of Rs. 2,000 and appeals up to the value of Rs. 500, in 1930 there were 76 small cause court, 32 money, 7 rent and 48 title suits while in 1931 there were 72 small cause court, 23 money, 2 rent and 30 title suits instituted. Rent suits have gone down in numbers since the wide extension of the certificate procedure under section 158-A of the Bengal Tenancy Act to the Bettiah Estate tenure-holders, but in the last two years the number has risen again owing to economic conditions. After the settlement there was an increase of title suits but in recent years the number of these suits have again decreased.



The commonest forms of serious crime are burglary, theft, rioting and dacoity. In 1931 the totals of cases reported were as follows:—Theft 414, burglary 772, receiving stolen property 62, robbery 14, dacoity 74, riots and unlawful assemblies cases 124 (separate figures are not available), hurt with aggravation 83, murders 12 and culpable homicide 10. These figures show an increase on the figures of 1929, which may be taken as a normal year, when the totals of cases reported were theft 343, burglary 572, receiving stolen property 51, robbery 20, dacoity 15, riots and unlawful assemblies 70, hurt with aggravation 82, murder 9, culpable homicide 6. The large increase in the more serious forms of crime is to be attributed mainly to the spirit of irresponsible lawlessness which is the inevitable result of the campaign of civil disobedience, which spread throughout the district in 1930. The economic depression did not apparently contribute much to the increase, as crime did not appreciably increase when the depression was at its worst and there was no large increase in the less serious forms of crime against property as might be expected.

Champan has always been subject to the raids of dacoits from Nepal and from Gorakhpur and Saran districts as from its shape and geographical position it is easy for criminals to commit dacoities in the district and then slip across the borders. For many years a border patrol of *chaukidars* has been organized along the Nepal frontier, as a check against these raids. Gangs recently formed in the district have, however, been mainly responsible for the increase of this form of crime.

The riots have usually, as previously, been the results of land disputes, but often have been of a more serious type. Recently, for instance, a dispute over a small plot of land led to a riot in which five men were killed.

Champan is the home of a criminal tribe known as Criminal Magahiya Doms, who are described in a monograph entitled *Tribes. the "Outcasts"* by Geoffrey R. Clarke, I.C.S., in 1903, from which I quote: "The Magahiya has made little or no advance since we first knew him. He is still a nomad and a thief. In the words of Mr. J. Kennedy, late Collector of Gorakhpur, 'He is born in an *arhar* field and schooled to theft from his infancy. He wanders an outcast from the beginning. He lives without shelter and without food for the morrow, perpetually



moving from encampment to encampment chased by the police and execrated by the villager. His greatest pride is a successful burglary and a prolonged drinking bout his most coveted reward. Hinduism has failed to reach him, its great gods are unknown to him, even the local divinities are seldom the object of his reverence." Jail offers no terrors to the Dom. It is with him the inevitable result of being a bungler at his trade. He has come to regard it as part of his education. His greatest terror is the lash : and I have no doubt that this is the sole form of punishment which acts as a real deterrent. Despite the fact that Government has provided agricultural settlements for him in Gorakhpur and Bihar, the Dom is still a nomad. The settlements serve as houses for the women and children but the men are seldom found in them. The women are all prostitutes, and are of exceptionally fine and handsome appearance. There is no doubt that they act as spies for the men. They enter the villages on the pretext of begging, and find out the persons who have property worth stealing and where they keep it. They have a much readier wit than their masters and always act as spokesmen when an official visits any of their settlements. The Dom under the present regime has not an altogether unpleasant life. The so-called agricultural settlements always provide him with an asylum if the house of a friendly zamindar is not near at hand. He goes about armed with a sharp pointed knife, which he uses for all purposes and which forms a very efficient weapon for either attack or defence. To give him his due, the Dom will only use his knife when in a very tight corner, but when he does use it, the result is often fatal.

In fine the life of the Dom is one of perpetual excitement. He has a handsome wife, if not two, and so long as she brings grist to the mill, he is not particular about the favours which she confers upon others. If he makes a good haul, he has a splendid feast and is drunk for a week ; if he is caught, it means a cessation of work for two or more years, only to begin his old career with a renewed energy on release. Surely such a life, though perhaps degrading, is full of a certain romance, and at present there are no signs that the Magahiya is being won from his ancient ways and is being induced to adopt the humdrum existence of an honest cultivator.

Since 1903 the life of the Dom has changed and is changing materially. The first systematic attempt to reclaim the Magahiya Doms in the district was made by Mr. (late



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Sir E.) Henry, the District Magistrate, in 1882, who established settlements at Chauterwa in the village of Bargaon and at Fatehpur, where they were given land to cultivate, huts to live in and agricultural implements and farm stock. Later settlements were established at Ramnagar and Chauterwa and at the present time there is one large settlement at Chauterwa, in which all the members of the tribe are concentrated except those whose names have been struck off the register or to whom permanent or temporary leave has been given to live outside the settlement.

The Doms live now under strict discipline and unless leave of absence is given, they are locked up at night. They are registered under the Criminal Tribes Act under which absconding is a criminal offence. The settlement was managed by special police officers until August 22nd, 1913, on which date it was taken over by the Salvation Army and is now known as the Salvation Army Agricultural and Industrial Settlement. Last year (1931) there were 323 adults and 141 children, i.e., total 464 in the settlement. There were 38 cases of absconding during the year but 21 of these were caught or returned. The increase of women and children absconders was due to a story circulated amongst the settlers that their children would be taken from them and sent to school. The four men who absconded, did so through fear of the rumour that the police were after them in connection with a dacoity case. On the whole the general condition of the settlement is satisfactory. More land is required. The weaving section has been reorganized but finds it difficult to compete with the low prices of mill cloth. The personnel consists of two Europeans, a Manager and Assistant Manager, 3 Indian teachers, a head clerk and a weaving master. 37 adults and 17 children have been allowed to reside outside the settlement on pass, 39 men have been employed as police *chaukidars* with 82 women and children. It has been found that these privileges are only in very rare cases abused and there is good reason to believe that the sound education and training given in the settlement are having an appreciable effect.

The head of the police force in the district is the District Police Superintendent. For police purposes the district is divided into three inspectors' circles. Sadr A consists of Motihari, Dhaka, Ghorasahan, Adapur and Raxaul thanas, and Sadr B consists of Gobindgunj, Kesariya, Madhuban, Segauli



and Pipra thanas, while the Bettiah subdivision forms the third. A fourth inspector is employed in the court at Motihari. The force includes also one Deputy Superintendent stationed at Motihari, one sergeant-major, 39 sub-inspectors, of whom 4 are employed in court (2 at Motihari and 2 at Bettiah), 35 writer-head-constables, 16 havildars and 374 constables. These figures are those of the sanctioned cadre on 31st December 1931. There is one policeman to every 4,575 persons in the district.

**Village  
chaukidars.**

The rural force for the watch and ward of villages consist of 147 *dafadars* and 12,249 *chaukidars* for the whole district, 77 *dafadars* and 1,121 *chaukidars* for the Sadr subdivision and 70 *dafadars* and 1,128 *chaukidars* for the Bettiah subdivision. The villages are divided into unions and the pay of *dafadars* and *chaukidars* is collected by the union *panches* of whom one is appointed Assessor *panch* under the Village Administration Act. The pay of the *chaukidars* is Rs. 5 per mensem and of the *dafadars* Rs. 7 per mensem.

**JAILS.**

There is a district jail at Motihari and a subsidiary jail at Bettiah. The Superintendent of the Sadr jail is the Civil Surgeon of Motihari who has the assistance of a jailor and two assistant jailors, a staff of warders and a doctor in charge of the hospital. During the last two years owing to the overcrowding additional staffs have been posted at times. The sub-jail at Bettiah is under the supervision of the Subdivisional Officer, Bettiah, who is assisted by a Deputy Superintendent, who usually is the sub-assistant surgeon employed in the King Edward Memorial hospital at Bettiah. It is meant for under-trials and convicts up to 14 days' imprisonment. The capacity of the jail at Motihari at the present time is convicts 258, under-trials 32, civil 6, females 31 and hospital 38, total 365. During the last two years this population has been largely exceeded without any deterioration in the health of the inmates. The average population of the Sadr jail was 383.32 males and 8.23 females in the year 1931. The industries of the jail are oil-milling, durree-weaving, making aloe-mats, cloth-weaving, making dusters and durree-ashnis, aloe-pounding, wheat-grinding, *dal* grinding, rice-cleaning and surkhi-pounding.



## LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

THE district board was first established in 1887 when the provisions of the Bengal Local Self-Government Act was extended to Champaran. The board then consisted of 17 members, the District Magistrate was *ex-officio* a member of the board and invariably its chairman up to 1924. Government servants and planters predominated on the board in 1905-06, 35 per cent being Government servants and 57 per cent planters, while the landholding class accounted for 6 per cent. In 1923-24 there were 21 members, of whom 6 were *ex-officio*, 5 nominated and 10 elected, 10 members of the board being Europeans. In 1924 the provisions of the Bihar and Orissa Amendment Act of 1923 came into force and the first election took place. Since then the board has consisted of 36 members, of whom 4 are *ex-officio*, 5 nominated and 27 are elected. The chairman and vice-chairman are non-official and elected. Since 1924 congress influence on the board has been very strong.

The average income of the board during the 10 years ending in 1901-02 was Rs. 1,41,000, of which Rs. 89,000 was derived from rates and during the quinquennium ending in 1904-05 is amounted to Rs. 1,48,000. In 1905-06 the income was Rs. 2,28,000 including Rs. 87,000 from provincial rates, Rs. 13,500 contributed from provincial revenues, Rs. 11,000 from tolls on ferries and Rs. 10,000 from pounds.

In 1922-23 the income from rates had increased to Rs. 3,05,035—since when it has not appreciably varied the average income being somewhat lower—and the total receipts Rs. 4,52,739. The income from ferries was largely increased after 1924 when the control of six valuable ferries was transferred to the board. This income which in 1924-25 was Rs. 29,680 rose to Rs. 46,018 in 1931-32.

The income from pounds has also increased, the figure in 1931-32 being Rs. 15,866. In 1929-30 which is chosen as being the last year before the civil disobedience campaign



and economic depression, the total receipts of the board were Rs. 6,50,697, the most important items being rates Rs. 3,01,563, pounds Rs. 16,786, school fees Rs. 22,600; Government grant, educational, Rs. 1,95,340, Government grant, medical, Rs. 18,185; Medical, other contributions, Rs. 10,819; Ferries Rs. 32,724; and Government grant for civil works Rs. 15,000.

Expenditure.

In 1929-30 the main items of expenditure were the following :—Office establishment and contingencies Rs. 27,013, Education Rs. 2,59,873, of which middle schools Rs. 54,684, primary schools Rs. 45,012, and grants-in-aid Rs. 1,48,520 were the main items. Medical and sanitation Rs. 83,066, of which Rs. 11,710 was spent on general medical establishment, Rs. 53,051 on hospitals and dispensaries, Rs. 5,369 on sanitation charges, and Rs. 11,636 on other contributions. Rs. 20,522 was spent on veterinary charges, Rs. 15,588 on superannuation allowances and pension including provident funds, Rs. 5,292 on printing, Rs. 2,33,561 was spent on civil works, the more important headings being the following :—

		Original works.	Repairs.
		Rs.	Rs.
Communications	...	39,849	96,284
Buildings	...	24,800	9,189
(of this total Rs. 12,256 was spent on Educational buildings).			
Water-supply	...	6,666	2,057
Establishment and contingencies		47,372	...
Staging bungalows	...	...	4,562

LOCAL  
BOARDS.

The local boards of Bettiah and Motihari or Sadr work under the supervision of the district board. Previous to 1924 the former consisted of 3 *ex-officio* and 8 nominated, and the latter of 3 *ex-officio* and 7 nominated members. The chairmen of both were the Subdivisional Officers who were elected. Since 1924 the Motihari board has consisted of one *ex-officio*, 5 nominated and 15 elected and the Bettiah board, of one *ex-officio*, 3 nominated and 12 elected members, the chairmen of both being elected. There are now no European members,



The local boards manage pounds and primary schools in the two subdivisions and also repair the more important village roads which have been taken on the schedule as local board roads.

Five union boards have been constituted under the Village Union Administration Act of 1922 at Bagaha, Shikarpur and Chainpatia in the Bettiah subdivision and Sugauli and Mehsi in the Sadr subdivision. Of these, Bagaha, Chainpatia and Mehsi were previously unions under Act III (B.C.) of 1885.

The area administered by the board varies from Mehsi which includes 450 acres only to Shikarpur which includes 21 square miles. The populations vary from Mehsi (5,000) to Sugauli (15,205) and Bagaha (15,000); the number of taxpayers from 543 in Mehsi to 1,850 in Sugauli and the number of voters from 543 in Mehsi to 1,299 in Shikarpur. The number of members of these boards is 50, of whom 42 are Hindus and 8 Muhammadans. The receipts which in 1930-31 including the opening balances totalled Rs. 29,698 in all were mainly derived from the following: Union *chaukidari* tax (Rs. 6,261), union tax (Rs. 4,275), pound receipt (Rs. 1,843), contributions from the district board (Rs. 1,186) and other sources (Rs. 1,059). The boards spent Rs. 7,829 on education, Rs. 1,300 on conservancy, Rs. 2,028 on other sanitary measures, Rs. 1,102 on water-supply, Rs. 827 on drainage, and only Rs. 280 on roads; Rs. 1,585 was spent on establishment other than *daffadars* and *chaukidars* and Rs. 685 on collection charges.

There are two municipalities in the district, viz., Motihari and Bettiah. Both were established in 1869 and previous to the passing of the Bihar and Orissa Municipal Act VII of 1922 each of the boards consisted of 12 commissioners, of whom 2 members were *ex-officio* and 8 in Motihari and 8 in Bettiah were nominated. Since 1923 each board has consisted of 20 commissioners, of whom 16 are elected. In Motihari one and in Bettiah two commissioners are *ex-officio* and the balance are nominated. The chairmen and vice-chairmen of both are elected non-officials.

The area within municipal bounds is  $6\frac{1}{2}$  square miles. In 1930-31 the population was 17,545 (according to the census of 1931), of whom 2,427 or 13.8 per cent were rate-payers. The large increase from 13,828 in 1921 is due, it is thought,



mainly to the growth of trade but also partly to the expansion of schools and the building of the new civil court and the consequent increase of litigation.

The average annual income of the municipality from 1895 to 1900 was Rs. 16,200, from 1900 to 1905 was Rs. 20,400 and in 1905-06 Rs. 24,000. In 1930-31 the total income was Rs. 37,157, the main sources being holding tax at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of the annual value (Rs. 18,036), tax on animals and vehicles (Rs. 1,122), conservancy tax at 4 per cent on the annual value of holdings (Rs. 6,991), markets and slaughter-houses (Rs. 3,573), grants from Government, general (Rs. 500), and educational (Rs. 1,829), and miscellaneous (Rs. 3,160).

The total expenditure excluding advances, etc. in 1930-31 was Rs. 34,502, the main heads being General Administration, office establishment, etc. (Rs. 1,693), collection of taxes (Rs. 1,692), lighting (Rs. 2,389), other establishment charges (Rs. 892), drainage repairs (Rs. 610), and establishment charges (Rs. 1,430), latrines (Rs. 5,827), road cleaning (Rs. 5,700), medical (Rs. 2,600), building repairs (Rs. 654), road repairs (Rs. 1,518), stores (Rs. 2,172), education, school (Rs. 4,265), and contribution (Rs. 1,308), miscellaneous (Rs. 2,272).

The municipality in recent years has seen bad times. In 1919 a Government grant of Rs. 75,000 was received for a minor waterworks scheme for the town. Rs. 14,421 was spent in the next few years in experiments, which failed and resulted in the abandonment of the scheme. This large grant was in the next few years largely encroached upon owing to bad collections.

In June 1930 the municipality suffered a severe blow in the loss of its office and most of the collection registers by fire: this fire occurred at the time of audit and was due to deliberate incendiarism, and as a result the municipality found it impossible to collect a large proportion of arrears.

In the beginning of the year 1930-31 the percentage of outstanding collections of taxes on current demand was 55 and at the end of the year 66. As a result necessary heads of expenditure such as upkeep of roads and improvement of sanitation have been starved.

Bettiah.

The area within municipal limits is  $8\frac{1}{2}$  square miles. In 1931 the population was 27,938 of whom 5,885 or 21.0 per cent were rate-payers. This increase from 24,291 in 1921 is due,



it is thought, mainly to the growth of trade and partly to the expansion of schools, hospitals, etc. The average annual income of the municipality from 1895 to 1900 was Rs. 16,600, from 1900 to 1905 Rs. 21,600 and in 1905-06 Rs. 25,000. In 1930-31 the total income was Rs. 53,647, the main sources being tax on holdings at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent on the annual value of holdings (Rs. 26,463), tax on animals and vehicles (Rs. 4,235), tax on professions and trades (Rs. 935), conservancy tax at  $3\frac{3}{4}$  per cent on the annual value of holdings (Rs. 10,402), pounds (Rs. 1,182), fees, educational (Rs. 1,235), markets and slaughter-houses (Rs. 3,442), Government grant, educational (Rs. 2,916), grants from other sources, general (Rs. 788), and medical (Rs. 537).

The total expenditure in 1930-31 excluding advances, etc. was Rs. 54,738, the main headings being General Administration including office establishment (Rs. 1,295), collection of taxes (Rs. 2,094), lighting (Rs. 4,506), drainage repairs (Rs. 2,544), water-supply repairs (Rs. 1,064), latrines (Rs. 11,480), road cleaning (Rs. 10,011), markets and slaughter-house (Rs. 2,948), road repairs (Rs. 6,714), schools (Rs. 6,716), and contributions for Public Instruction (Rs. 1,469).

The Bettiah municipality is in a fortunate position. In the past it has received great assistance from the Bettiah Estate, which has subscribed generously to projects of all kinds. The municipality is relieved of the responsibility of keeping up hospitals as the estate maintains two large well-equipped and exceptionally well-run hospitals for men and women, respectively. The municipality also derives a considerable income from the taxes on the estates' buildings in collecting which there is no difficulty. But in spite of this the percentage of outstanding balances on current demand at the beginning of the year 1930-31 was 21 and at the end of the year 22. Much has been done in recent years to improve the drainage of the town, but it still needs improvement. A general drainage scheme is under contemplation.

The non-Muhammadan rural population of the district returns two representatives from North and South Champaran, respectively, and the Muhammadan rural population returns one representative. The populations of the municipalities are included in the Non-Muhammadan and Muhammadan Tirhut Division Urban Constituencies. The landholders are also included in the Tirhut Division landholders' constituency.

Representation in the Provincial Council.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### EDUCATION.

#### LITERACY.

ACCORDING to the recent census of 1931 there are 2,145,687 persons in Champaran. Of these 62,030 are literate, of whom 5,386 are literate in English; i.e. under 29.4 per thousand are literate. Out of 1,064,731 females only 4,389 are literate, of whom 362 are literate in English, i.e. a little over 4.1 per thousand. Of the 57,641 literate males, 7,273 are between the ages of 7 and 13, 13,068 are between the ages of 14 and 23, and 37,300 are 24 and above.

The figures for the females are total 4,389 literate, of whom 855 are between the ages of 7 and 13, 1,305 between the ages of 14 and 23, and 2,230 aged 24 and over.

There are 91,921 Brahmans, of whom 11,188 are literate or nearly 122 per thousand; 1,407,646 other Hindus, of whom 39,435 are literate or 28 per thousand; 287,687 depressed classes, of whom only 716 are literate, that is less than 2.5 per thousand.

Turning to the Muhammadan population of whom there are 354,235 in the district; 8,398 males are literate and 1,314 females or in all 27.4 per thousand. These figures show a remarkably high proportion of literate females in comparison to the figures for Hindus.

#### PROGRESS OF EDUCATION.

When Champaran was constituted a district, education was in a very backward condition; and even as late as 1870-71 there were only two schools under Government inspection, attended by 51 pupils and almost entirely supported by a Government grant. Within the next two years there was a great development owing to the introduction of Sir George Campbell's scheme for the advancement of vernacular education, by which the grant-in-aid rules were extended to village *pathshalas*. The result was that in 1872-73 there were altogether 72 schools maintained or aided by Government, attended by 1,121 pupils, besides 6 unaided schools with 101 pupils. Considerable difficulties were, however, encountered in the extension of primary education, owing to the ignorance



and prejudices of the people, an idea of which may be gathered from a report regarding the progress made in the Bettiah subdivision. "In this subdivision," it was said "only 5 original *pathshalas* were discovered; and the Assistant Magistrate reports that he has had the greatest difficulty in inducing the people to send their children to the new schools, and in obtaining qualified *gurus*. Anything like systematic education is quite unknown in these parts; and the new system has not only not been viewed with favour by the people, but has been passively resisted as much as possible. The *patwari* class oppose it especially, because they fear that an extended system of education will afford too great facilities to aspirants for their particular business. The zamindar class has also failed to give that assistance which in other and more enlightened districts has been willingly afforded. This arises very much from the fact that there are very few resident members of this class, who are themselves sufficiently intelligent to comprehend the utility of an extended system of education among the masses, and to take an active interest in its promotion."

During the next 20 years progress was rapid and sustained and in 1892-93 altogether 1,036 schools were in existence and the number of pupils under instruction was 21,803. In the course of the next 10 years there was a falling off in the number both of schools and pupils, the former decreasing in 1901-02 to 810 and the latter to 19,974; this was due largely to the famine of 1896-97, for the number of educational institutions fell from 1,136 in 1895-96 to 773 in that year and the aggregate of scholars from 25,723 to 17,696. The quinquennium ending in March 1907 did not witness any recovery, in consequence of a series of bad year in which disease was prevalent and crops were short, the number of educational institutions on the 31st March 1907 standing at 798 and the number of pupils on the rolls at 17,770.

During the next year there was considerable recovery, the figures rising to 943 institutions with 21,268 pupils. There was again considerable expansion in 1913 to 1915, the figures rising from 1,065 institutions with 25,566 pupils in 1912-13 to 1,138 institutions with 27,513 pupils in 1914-15.

In 1921-22 the progress of education suffered a set-back owing to the non-co-operation movement. When the full effect of the movement had been felt at the end of the year 1921-22 the recognized institutions had fallen to 770 with



20,800 pupils and the unrecognized institutions numbered 189 with 5,205 pupils. These latter included 100 national schools with 3,336 pupils. From this point there was a gradual recovery. Within a year the number of national schools had dwindled to 50. Expansion of recognized institutions continued till 1926-27 when the number of schools reached 1,506 with 46,193 pupils. Since that year there has been a slight decline due to financial reasons.

It should perhaps be noted that in 1924 the district board was reconstituted under the new Act as a mainly elected body with a non-official chairman. From that date till 1930 congress influence predominated in the district board as also in the district board schools : consequently the civil disobedience campaign of 1930 was not directed against recognized institutions and no new national schools sprang up.

**Secondary education.**

There is no college in the district. Secondary education has made great strides in the last 25 years. In 1907 there were 2 high schools, 7 middle English schools and 2 middle vernacular schools, the number on the rolls being only 1,124. In 1929-30 there were 6 high English schools with 1,491 pupils and 38 middle schools with 4,039 pupils. Of the high English schools one, the Motihari zila school, is managed by Government; two, the Heycock Academy and the Tirhut Vidyalaya at Mehshi, are aided; and three, the Mangal Seminary at Motihari, the Bettiah Raj high English school at Bettiah, and the Christ Raja Mission high English school at Bettiah, are unaided.

**Primary education.**

There are now 1,269 managed, aided, and stipendiary, and 61 unaided primary schools in the district attended by 37,564 pupils.

**Special schools.**

There are 4 elementary training schools for *gurus* and Muhammadan teachers, all managed by Government.

There is also a training class intended for female teachers attached to the St. Agnes Mission girls' school at Chuhari, and managed by the Mission there.

There are two technical schools, i.e., the weaving institute at Gahiri and the knitting school at Bettiah, which is attended by females only, both managed by the Mission.

There is one commercial school at Motihari with 12 pupils on the roll.



The tailoring class attached to the Gauri Shankar middle English school is popular and the weaving class attached to the Dhaka middle school is useful.

There are 11 Sanskrit *tols*, 7 aided and 4 unaided, with 434 Oriental pupils. There are 6 Madrasas, of which 4 are aided, one studies unaided and one unrecognized, with 312 pupils.

There is a school attached to the Dom Settlement at Education Chautarwa and managed by the Salvation Army which is of special attended by 62 pupils, of whom 20 are girls. classes.

Apart from these 273 pupils of aboriginal classes and 27 of the untouchable classes attend schools of general education.

There are 3 middle English schools for girls with 377 Girls' pupils. Two of these are aided by Government, and one is schools. managed by Mission authorities. There are also 170 primary schools for girls with 3,849 pupils.

The supervising staff consists of one District Inspector Supervising of Schools in class II of the Bihar and Orissa Educational staff. Service, one Deputy Inspector in the Upper Division of the Subordinate Educational Service, 10 sub-inspectors in the lower division of this service and one inspecting Maulavi outside the grades.

There were in 1930-31 20 hostels with 455 boarders, all Hostels. males, including those of the elementary training schools, Sanskrit *tols* and Madrasas. A fine hostel was opened in 1931 at the Christ Raja high English school at Bettiah, built largely at the cost of the Bettiah Estate.



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CHAMPARAN.

CHAPTER XV.

GAZETTEER.

**Araraj.**—See Lauriya Araraj.

**Bagaha.**—A village in the Bettiah subdivision situated on the eastern bank of the Great Gandak, 35 miles north-east of Bettiah. It is the headquarters of a thana and one of the largest villages in the subdivision and contains a dispensary in charge of a civil assistant surgeon and a small veterinary dispensary and a union board. It is also the terminus of the Bairagnia-Bagaha railway. The Bettiah Raj Forest Officer, who is also the Circle Officer of the Rajpore Sihoria Circle, lives near Bagaha Station, Naraipur Estate, which belongs to Mr. and Miss Murray and is managed by Mr. Gwyther is a few miles from the village, as also is Mr. Brouckes estate. Both these estates are now building small sugar mills.

**Bargaon.**—Is a small village about 5 miles from Bagaha. It contains Chauterwa, the Salvation Army Settlement for Doms. *Jharans*, *dhurries*, etc. are made at the settlement besides which the Doms work on the land.

**Bara.**—In the headquarters subdivision quite close to Bara-Chakia station. It was formerly an indigo factory and the oldest in the district, having been established by Colonel Hickey in 1813. It is now a large sugar factory known as the Champaran Sugar Works and owned by Messrs. Begg Sutherland and Co. who also are the proprietors of the Barah Estate which grows sugarcane for the mill. The mill has an outturn of approximately 184,000 maunds a year.

**Bawangarhi.**—A name, meaning 52 forts, given to the remains of some old fortifications near Darwabari, in the extreme north-western corner of the district, about 5 miles from Tribeni. The place is also called Tirpan Bazar or the 53 bazars, and the name Darwabari appears to mean the door of the palace. Darwabari itself is a small village on the edge of the forest, with swamps to the east. The remains of the 52 forts and 53 bazars are a short distance to the



north, and include some ruins known as the Kachahri. Also, nearby are an old tank and a curious well on the edge of which there are rude stone representations of alligators. To the north-west across the swamp are remains of massive embankments, which may perhaps have been intended to serve as lines of circumvallation or as reservoirs.

No trustworthy information can be obtained as to the history of Bawangarhi, though Mr. Vincent Smith hazards the opinion that it is just possible that it is identical with Ramagrama, the ancient city visited by the Chinese pilgrims Fa Hian and Hiuen Tsiang. It forms the subject of various traditions, one of which connects it with the lives of the Pandavas, who are said to have spent the weary years of their exile in the neighbouring forest. According to another legend, it was the residence of a chief called Baora, who is said to have been contemporaneous with the Simraon dynasty; it has been conjectured that the forts were erected by this Raja as a retreat for himself and his followers from the invasion or depredations of his more powerful neighbours to the south and the hill tribes of Nepal to the north. Another tradition is that there was a chain of 52 forts erected by immigrants from South Bihar, who came here under a leader called Bhim Singh, and continued to hold this tract under a number of petty chieftains. The general belief is that the surrounding country was once thickly populated, and this belief is confirmed by the remains of walls, with tanks and wells inside them, as well as by the deserted villages, plantations and mango groves found in this part of the district.

The following legend regarding Bawangarhi, which forms one of the favourite songs of the Nats, was discovered by Mr. W. R. Bright, C.S.I., when Subdivisional Officer of Bettiah. At one time the Rajas of Bawangarhi were two brothers, Jasor (the elder) and Torar, the former of whom had two sons, Allaha and Ruddal, and the latter two sons, named Jhagru and Jaman. Disputes arose between them, which ended in their agreeing to divide their kingdom, but when they came to divide a mango orchard containing five trees on the banks of the Gandak, a quarrel broke out in which Torar was killed by Jasor. Torar's son Jhagru avenged his father's death and would probably have also killed Jasor's widow and her sons, had she not escaped with them to



Sagarpokhra at Bettiah. Thence she went to various friends, only to be expelled by them as soon as Jhagru heard that they were giving her shelter, until at last in despair she wandered out with her two sons into the forest hoping that they would be killed by wild beasts. It happened, however, that the Benares Raja passed through the forest on a hunting expedition and having found the mother and her children, had compassion on her and took them to Benares. For two years they lived there, until Jhagru heard of it and at once demanded their expulsion. From Benares she wandered to Kalinjar, where Allaha attained his majority, and having shown some skill in war was given the fortress of Mahuagarh. Having learnt his history, he travelled off in the garb of a fakir to Bawangarhi, and while sitting by the great *ihil* which is still a prominent feature of the place, saw his father's corpse hanging on a tree and being daily scourged by Jhagru. When he went up to the tree to take the corpse down, his father's spirit told him that he must win it by force of arms and not by theft. He was afterwards recognized by Jhagru, but managed to escape on an old horse, which recognized him, to Mahuagarh. Having collected a large force there, he attacked Bawangarhi, but met with a decisive defeat at the hands of Jhagru and became his prisoner. The tables were turned by the skill in witchcraft possessed by his wife, who overcame the spell cast by Jhagru's mother and released her husband and other captives. A battle ensued in which Jhagru was defeated, taken prisoner, and then killed; and Allaha, after dividing the Raj between his aunt and a female servant of his, left the place and returned home.

**Bediban.**—A village situated in the south-east of the headquarters subdivision, about half a mile north-east of the Pipra railway station and about a mile to the south of Sitakund. The village contains the remains of an old fort, 925 feet long from north to south and 670 feet broad, with an average height of 12 feet above the surrounding country. The ramparts, which appear to be of earth only, are covered with trees and surrounded by a broad shallow ditch. Close to the northern end of the enclosure there is a lofty terrace, 20 feet high, surrounded by a brick wall, with two long flights of steps on the north and the east. On the western half of this terrace stands a Hindu temple, a domed building with a verandah or portico on the entrance side, which faces the east. The only object of worship in this shrine is a



stone with a Muhammadan inscription, which is called Bhagwan-ka-Charanpad, or the foot-prints of Bhagwan. The stone is two feet square and one foot thick, with seven lines of Arabic writing in the usual raised letters. Unfortunately the daily libations of *ghi* and water have injured the letters so much that the record is not very legible; but General Cunningham was able to decipher the name of Mahmud Shah, whom he identified with Mahmud Sharki, King of Jaunpur (1450 A.D.). He was of opinion that not only was this Arabic inscription adopted as an object of Hindu worship, but that the temple itself had originally been a Muhammadan tomb which the Hindus appropriated. This, if true, would be a remarkable fact, as the reverse has generally been the case; but the style of the temple is not unusual in Bihar and does not point to a Muhammadan origin. (Reports, Archaeological Survey, India, Vol. XVI, Report, Archaeological Survey, Bengal Circle, 1901-02.)

**Bettiah Raj.**—A great estate extending over 1,443,073 acres. It belongs to a Babhan family over 250 years old, which traces its descent from one Ujjain Singh whose son, Gaj Singh, received the title of Raja from the Emperor Shah Jehan (1628-58). The family came into prominence in the 18th century during the time of the downfall of the Mughal Empire when we find frequent references made by Muhammadan historians to the Rajas of Bettiah as independent chiefs. Thus, in the Riyazus-Salatın, the Raja is described as a refractory and turbulent chief, whose territory had never acknowledged the dominion of any of the Subahdars. In order to subdue this chief Ali Vardi Khan led an expedition against him in 1729, and brought him and his territory under subjection. Subsequently, in 1748, the Raja seems to have entered into an alliance with the Afghan rebel chief of Darbhanga and gave shelter to their families during their revolt against the Bengal Viceroy; when the Afghans were defeated by Ali Vardi Khan, he offered to atone for his contumacy with a contribution of 3 lakhs of rupees. In 1759 Caillaud advanced against the fort of Bettiah, and compelled the Raja to submit; in 1762 another expedition was sent against him by Mir Kasim Ali Khan and his fort was again captured; and in 1766 a third expedition under Sir Robert Barker was necessary to establish British authority. A more detailed account of these transactions will be found in Chapter II.



At the time when Sarkar Champaran passed under British rule, it was in the possession of Raja Jugal Keshwar Singh, who succeeded Raja Dhurup Singh in 1763. This Raja soon came into conflict with the East India Company. He fell into arrears of revenue, and in the words of the Judges of the Diwani Adalat "rebelled and fought with the forces of the British Government, was defeated and fled to Bundelkhand for safety, and his Rajgi was seized upon and brought under the direct management of the Company". The attempt to manage the estate proved, however, a complete failure; and the Company finding that its revenue grew less and less, persuaded Jugal Keshwar Singh to return. They then settled with him parganas Majhawa and Simraon, the remainder of the district being given to his cousins, Sri Kishan Singh and Abdhut Singh and forming the Sheohar Raj. The same two parganas of Majhawa and Simraon were settled with Bir Keshwar Singh, the son of Jugal Keshwar Singh, at the Decennial Settlement in 1791, and still constitute the greater part of the Bettiah Raj Estate. Bir Keshwar Singh played a prominent part in the disputes which, as related in Chapter II, led to the Nepalese war, and was succeeded in 1816 by Anand Keshwar Singh, on whom Lord William Bentinck conferred the title of Maharaja Bahadur as a reward for services rendered. On the death of his successor, Newal Keshwar Singh in 1855, the estate passed to Rajendra Keshwar who, in the words of the Lieutenant-Governor, gave at the time of the Mutiny "praiseworthy aid and support to Government during the whole progress of the rebellion". The title of Maharaja Bahadur was also given to this Raja and to his son, Harendra Keshwar Singh, the last Maharaja of Bettiah, who was subsequently made a K.C.I.E. and died in 1893. He left no children and was succeeded by his senior widow, who died in 1896. The estate, which has been under the management of the Court of Wards since 1897, is at present held by the Maharaja's junior widow, Maharani Janki Kuar, who is styled Maharani by courtesy. Her title to the estate has been contested on three occasions. Babu Ramnandan Singh and Babu Girijanandan Singh of Sheohar each in turn laid claim to the estate, but their claims were disallowed by the Privy Council in 1902.

The Manager of the Estate who for the last few years has been an Indian Civil Servant on deputation, has his headquarters at Bettiah and the Estate property in Champaran



is divided into circles, i.e. Rajpore Sihoria, Bettiah, Motihari, Peeprah, and Turkaulia. Besides the property in this district, the estate also possesses landed property in the districts of Muzaffarpur, Patna, Saran, Mirzapur, Allahabad, Basti, Gorakhpur, Fyzabad and Benares. The property in the six districts last mentioned is now under the Court of Wards, United Provinces. The land revenue and cesses due from the estate amount to Rs. 6 lakhs and the collection of rent and cesses to nearly Rs. 29 lakhs. Compared to former years, a small portion only of the estate is now held on permanent leases by European planters. The loan of £245,000 negotiated in London in 1885 was paid off in the year 1925. The great majority of the permanent leases have been redeemed by the estate since the final repayment of this loan.

The estate maintains two large hospitals—the King Edward Memorial hospital for males and Lady Dufferin hospital for females. It has a dairy farm at Bettiah and an agricultural farm at Byreah a few miles from Bettiah. It also maintains a high English school and has got a magnificent market known as the Mina Bazar.

The Bettiah Estate maintains its own Engineering offices, staff and engineer, who is of the standing of an Executive Engineer.

**Bettiah subdivision.**—The Northern subdivision of the district lying between  $26^{\circ}36'$  and  $27^{\circ}31'N$  and  $83^{\circ}50'$  and  $94^{\circ}46'E$  and having an area of 2,013 sq. miles (1,099,199 acres). The southern portion of the subdivision is a level alluvial plain but towards the north-west the surface is more undulating and rises gradually near the Nepal frontier. From the north-western corner a range of low hills extends in a south-easterly direction for a distance of some 20 miles. Between this range and the Sumeshwar range which extends along the whole of the northern frontier lies the Dun valley. Rice is the main crop grown, particularly in the northern and eastern portions of the subdivision, but the area under sugar-cane has increased considerably this year owing to the building of new sugar mills. The population is 906,898 and the density is 450 per square mile as compared with an average of 608 for the whole district. The headquarters are at Bettiah and there are 1,319 villages. The bulk of the subdivision is included in the Bettiah Raj and Ramnagar Estates.



**Bettiah town.**—The headquarters of the subdivision of the same name, situated in  $26^{\circ}48'N$  and  $84^{\circ}30'E$ . Its population is 28,013.

Bettiah, which has been the headquarters of the Bettiah Rajas for the last two centuries, has an eventful history, being more than once attacked and taken in the closing days of the Muhammadan rule; an account of its fortunes during this period has already been given in Chapter II. Even as late as the close of the 18th century Bettiah was a place of considerable importance and Father Tieffenthaler, the great Jesuit Missionary and author of *Description of India*, one of the first Gazetteers of India, which was published in 1786, describes it as "populous city defended by a great castle surrounded by walls and fortified by towers near it are the temple and convent where dwell the missionaries of the Franciscan order". The castle referred to by Tieffenthaler appears to have been erected by Dhurup Singh, Raja of Bettiah, and remains of the fortifications are still traceable. Though it has lost something of its old importance, Bettiah is the principal trade centre in Champaran and there are several houses which carry on a considerable trade with Patna, Muzaffarpur and Chapra. The site of the town from a sanitary point of view is unsatisfactory, as it is bordered on the north and east by swampy land, and to the south by the Chandrawat river, which stagnates in the hot weather. It is, however, a good specimen of a native town, for the streets are in most cases fairly wide and clear. The name Bettiah (properly Betia) is said to be derived from the fact that the place was once famous for its cane (bent) jungle. Even now cane of a superior quality is found on the banks of the Chandrawat and other streams.

Government  
buildings.

A picturesque avenue runs up from the station to the main road leading into the town. At the end of the avenue where it joins the main road is the Subdivisional Officer's bungalow and beyond that are the court house, other Government buildings and the jail. On the opposite side of the main road are the dak bungalow, P. W. D. inspection bungalow and veterinary hospital. Just beyond the veterinary hospital there is a road turning south towards the Bettiah Raj, Manager's bungalow and on to the Assistant Manager's and Engineer's bungalow and also the Guest House and English Church. Farthest of all are the American Zenana Mission School, the new Roman Catholic Mission College and the Raj Dairy Farm.



This part of the town is well wooded with acres of fine mango groves. Besides the English Church there is a fine Mission Church in the town with a good belfry and an excellent set of bells brought from Europe and a clock tower. Close by is the main Mission building which has a very good printing press.

The Bettiah Raj palace occupies a large area in the centre of the town. Much of the old palace was removed and large modern additions were made by the Court of Wards. In 1910 at the request of the Maharani the new palace was built after the plan of the Graham's palace in Calcutta. The palace compound was made into a small park in the years 1921-22. The offices of the Manager, Assistant Manager and Estate Engineer are in the palace compound but the palace itself is unused as the present Maharani lives at Allahabad.

Near the palace are the Raj High English School which was built in 1906 and extended in 1913, also the Raj Sanskrit School built in 1913 and a large hostel for students built in 1917. Besides these schools the municipality has built a middle English school and the Raj maintains a middle English school for girls which was built in 1914-15 in the heart of the town. This school is in charge of the sisters of the Holy Cross (Ingeubolil) and has at present about 225 girls. The new Mission building is large and airy and is equipped with the latest type of knitting machines, and turns out knitted goods of a very good quality. The sisters are housed in a new convent part of which is used as a dispensary where over an average of 100 patients are treated daily and medicines are dispensed free. The sisters of this community direct the King Edward's Memorial and Lady Dufferin hospitals. They are assisted by the Sacred Heart order for Indian sisters founded by Bishop Van Hoeck.

The American Zenana Mission School already mentioned is also a middle English school recognized by Government and is maintained by the American Zenana Mission of the Assembly of God. It was opened in July 1924 by Miss Flint and is now in charge of Miss Wagenhnecht. There is a girls' hostel and playground, also a bungalow for Europeans and houses for Indian Christians. There is a small dispensary with a trained nurse in charge. At present there are 86 girls engaged in evangelistic work and the personnel consists of four American lady missionaries, eight teachers and several Indian workers. Just beyond this school is the Krist Raja, an excellent



**Krist Raja School.** high school for boys staffed by the Jesuit fathers and Indian teachers. The large hostel built by the Bettiah Raj was opened last year.

**Polo ground and Raj market.** Bettiah also has an excellent polo ground adjoining which is the new Raj market built in 1915—24. To the west of the polo ground are the Lady Dufferin and King Edward Memorial hospitals.

**Hospitals.** The Dufferin hospital has a maternity ward, Lady Doctor's and matrons' quarters and cottage wards. During the last 30 years this hospital has been gradually re-modelled and brought up to date. The King Edward Memorial hospital has also been much improved, equipped with electric lights and fans and X-ray apparatus.

Bettiah has many fine temples, some of which has been re-built in recent years. The Imambara to the west of the town was built by the Raj in 1924-25. The Raj has its own power house, veterinary hospital, etc.

**Roman Catholic Mission.**

Bettiah is the headquarters of a Capuchin Mission which has a most interesting history, as it is the lineal descendant of the great Capuchin Mission which penetrated to Lhasa and Nepal at the beginning of the 18th century. The Mission was established at Bettiah in December 1745 by the Rev. Father Joseph Mary dei Bernini, an Italian Capuchin Father. He came to India in 1739 and was first stationed for two years in Patna where he made the acquaintance of Dhurup Singh, Raja of Bettiah and treated him medically. The Raja invited him several times to visit Bettiah when there was sickness in his palace, and on one of these visits Father Joseph Mary succeeded in curing the Rani of a serious illness. Impressed by his skill and knowledge, Dhurup Singh wanted him to stay in Bettiah; but the Father refused to do so, unless sanction was obtained from Rome. He was transferred in 1742 to Lhasa, and in the meantime both the Raja and the Superior of the Mission wrote to Rome for permission to establish a station at Bettiah, the Raja asking the Pope to send two Capuchin Fathers there. Eventually the Superior of the Mission at Lhasa received a letter from Rome granting him permission to open a mission in Bettiah. In 1745 the Capuchin Fathers had to abandon Lhasa on account of the persecution of the Tibetans and took refuge in Nepal, whence Father Joseph Mary was sent to Bettiah. He arrived there on the



7th December 1745 and the Raja assigned him a house with a garden near his palace and allowed him to preach and make converts. This work Father Joseph Mary carried on with the occasional assistance of a second Capuchin Father until his death in 1761. When the English took Bettiah in 1766 Sir Robert Barker, who was in command of the forces, assigned the Mission about 60 bighas in the fort and also a plot of land outside Bettiah called Dasaiya Padri, extending over 200 bighas, for the support of themselves and their Christian converts. These grants were approved and renewed by the Governor-General in Council at Calcutta in 1786. The Mission is still in possession of these lands with the exception of about 10 bighas, of which they were deprived in 1792 by the then Raja. In 1892 Bettiah was made the headquarters of the Prefecture Apostolic of Bettiah and Nepal which was made over to the Capuchin Fathers of the Tyrolese Province.

At the beginning of the Great War in 1914 the Austrian Capuchins of Bettiah and Chuhari were interned and a year later expatriated. Their place was taken by Belgian Capuchins from Lahore, with the very Reverend Father Felix as Prefect Apostolic. They were assisted by six Indian priests, natives of Bettiah, who had been ordained between 1907 and 1914. In 1921 Bettiah was included in the new Diocese of Patna which was inaugurated by the Holy See in that year. The first Bishop of the diocese was the Right Rev. Dr. Louis Van Hoeck. The Bettiah Mission at the same time became part of the Patna Mission which was under the jurisdiction of the Society of Jesus of the American province of Missouri. As this province was afterwards subdivided the Patna Mission is dependent on Chicago. Since 1921 the Mission has expanded chiefly on educational lines. The personnel of the Mission at Bettiah at present consists of 2 Fathers, 1 Scholastic and 1 lay brother, and at the Taria tola 3 Fathers and 6 scholastic brothers—also as already mentioned there are European and Indian sisters.

**Bhaisalotan.**—See Tribeni Ghat.

**Chainpatia.**—10 miles north of Bettiah is a growing trade centre on the Bengal and North-Western Railway line between Bettiah and Narkatiagunj. A union board has been established. There is a district board dispensary and also an outpost of the Regions Beyond Mission. A large sugar mill is being erected by Messrs. Begg Sutherland and Co., which will undoubtedly enhance the importance of this place.



**Chakia.**—*See Bara.*

**Chakni.**—A small village about 2 miles south-east of Bagaha in an out-station of the Jesuit Mission of Bettiah and has a church which was designed and built under the supervision of the priests themselves. At present only one Father is living there.

**Chankigarh.**—The name of a remarkable mound in the Bettiah subdivision, situated 6 miles east of Ramnagar, a short distance north of the road from Shikarpur to Ramnagar. The mound, which stands about a quarter of a mile east of the village of Chanki, is a mass of solid brick-work about 90 feet high and is composed for the most part of large bricks, 14 inches square by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick. The whole mound from east to west is about 250 feet long, but of such a straggling shape that it is not easy to define its exact limits; its shape may, however, be roughly defined as resembling the letter L. The sides are perpendicular above a certain height, where they rise out of the debris which has accumulated from bricks, etc. constantly falling down. It was probably originally a fort, and the remains of some fortifications can still be seen, besides some insignificant shrines. Some sheets of water surround the mound, and to the south a broad winding path leads up to the summit. The mound is known locally as Jankigarh or Jankikot, and local tradition asserts that it was a fort of king Janaka. Another tradition is that a Buddhist Raja, whose palace was at Lauriya Nandangarh, 11 miles to the south had a favourite priest, named Tantrik, for whom he built this fort; and while he kept a light always burning at Lauriya, the priest kept a light on Chankigarh, in order that they might know that all was well with each other. Some excavations were made here more than 45 years ago by a Subdivisional Officer of Bettiah, but they only resulted in the finding of a cannon ball, an iron spike and some copper coins; it is not known what became of these curiosities. The neighbouring village of Chanki is remarkable for its length, for it extends for about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile from north to south. (Reports, Archaeological Survey, India, Vols. XVI and XXII; Report, Archaeological Survey, Bengal Circle, 1901-02.)

**Chuhari.**—A village about 6 miles north of Bettiah on the Parsa-Loheria road, is also a station of the Jesuit Mission at Bettiah. In 1785 Father Horace of Penna left Lhasa in despair at the order of the Tibetan authorities



that he and his two companions might only preach on condition that they declared the Tibetan religion to be good and perfect. He returned to the Mission hospice in Patan (Nepal) and died there some six weeks later. The Mission continued there for 24 years longer until the Gurkhas swept away the Newar dynasty and expelled the Capuchin Fathers. They retired to Chuhari where in 1769 the Raja of Bettiah gave them and their Newar converts an asylum. There the Mission has remained ever since and now maintains an orphanage and a middle English school for boys, a church and a presbytery for two Fathers and two brothers. A substantial building has recently been erected to house the orphans and other boarders. There are also an orphanage and a middle English school for girls, a home for widows, a free dispensary and a training school for girls who wish to qualify for teachers' certificate—all managed by the Sisters of the Holy Cross.

**Darwabari.**—See Bawangarhi.

**Dewar.**—A village in tappa Ramgir in the extreme north-east of the Bettiah subdivision. The village contains a shrine at which two fairs are held yearly, one on the full moon of the month of *Kartik* and the other on the Ramnawami in *Chait*. Local legend says that the place originally contained the fort of Arjuna Maharaja, and that it was attacked by a predatory tribe. An Ahirin, the sister of Krishna, was caught by them while hiding her husband, and had her nose and ears cut off. She was then turned into stone. The idol now in existence has a broken nose and this peculiarity has no doubt given rise to the legend. The offerings made at the shrine are the perquisites of a family of Tharu Gurus.

**Jankigarh.**—See Chankigarh.

**Kasturia.**—A name given to a large mound of brick ruins on the west side of Saraiya in the south-east of the headquarters subdivision situated 16 miles east of Motihari. The mound, which is 160 feet long by 100 feet broad, is said to be the remains of a Chero Raja's palace. It has been dug up in all directions for the large bricks of which it is composed, and the fields for half a mile round are also strewn with their fragments. To the west of the mound there is a large *pakar tree* (*Ficus glomerata*) about 15 feet in diameter,



under which is a seated female figure, which the people call Durgavati Rani, but which appears to be the goddess Durga, as she holds the usual bow and arrow. The stone is much injured below, but the broken figure of a lion on which the goddess is seated, is faintly traceable. She has eight arms, and the figure is clearly a representation of Durga as Ashtabhuja Devi, or the "eight-armed goddess". The stone is partly enclosed by the tree, and is 3 feet 5 inches high and 2 feet 3 inches broad. The local legend is that Durgavati Rani was the wife of one of the Chero Rajas. One day when she was seated under the *pakar* tree, a Banjara came up to her, and tried to take off her bracelets, and other ornaments. She prayed for assistance and was at once turned into stone, with all her ornaments. (Reports, Archaeological Survey, India, Vol. XVI.)

**Kessariya.**—A village in the headquarters subdivision in the extreme south of the district. The village has a police-station, a district board dispensary and a registration office. Two miles to the south stands a lofty brick mound capped by a solid brick tower of considerable size, which clearly marks the remains of a Buddhist stupa. The mound itself, which is now overgrown, with jungles, is a ruined mass of solid brick-work, 62 feet in height, and 1,400 feet in circumference at its base; while the stupa, which is in ruins, has a diameter of 68 feet at its base and a total height of  $51\frac{1}{2}$  feet; originally it was crowned by a pinnacle, which must have stood 80 or 90 feet high, or including the ruined basement, not less than 150 feet above the ground. General Cunningham was of opinion that it dates back to A.D. 200 to 700, and that it was built upon the ruins of a much older and larger stupa. This ancient monument is known to the people as the *deora* of Raja Ben, who is said to have been one of the five supreme Emperors of India and is therefore called Raja Ben Chakravarti. It can hardly be doubted that the tradition of Raja Ben preserves the story recorded by Hiuen Tsiang, according to whose account this stupa was referred to a Chakravarti Raja by the Buddhists of the seventh century. He states that somewhat less than 200 li (i.e. about 30 miles) to the north-west of Vaisali, which is the exact position of the Kesariya stupa, there was an ancient town which had been deserted for many ages. It possessed a stupa built over the spot where Buddha had announced that in one of his former existences he had been a Bodhisatwa



and had reigned over that town as a Chakravarti Raja. This stupa is, in fact, one of the many memorial stupas built by the Buddhists at places connected with some remarkable event in the life of Buddha.

Local tradition asserts that Raja Ben had, by his austerities, become a Chakravarti or supreme ruler with superhuman powers, while his queen Kamalavati was able to stand on a lotus leaf when she bathed. The Raja, it is said, was an ideal landlord for he either took no rent for his lands, or only a *sup*, i.e. a winnowing basket of corn, from each cultivator. Unfortunately, one day he broke this excellent rule by ordering that everyone should give him a piece of gold the size of a grain of barley; he immediately lost his supernatural powers, and the lotus leaf gave way under his queen as she was bathing, and she was drowned. The Raja consulted his Pandits, who told him that she had been drowned because he had raised the old land rent; and he built the *deora* or stupa, and going inside with all his family closed the entrance by his magical powers and was seen no more. The site of the queen's palace is still pointed out in the shape of a mound called Raniwas, about half a mile to the north-east of the stupa; the tank in which she bathed is called the Gangeya Tal three-quarters of a mile to the east of the stupa; and a large sheet of water, 3,000 feet in length, immediately to the south of the stupa is called Raja Ben's tank. The mound called Raniwas or the Rani's palace, is however, really the site of an old Buddhist monastery. Excavations made there in 1862 disclosed the remains of small cells and of a shrine containing a colossal figure of Buddha; this statue was removed in 1878 by a Bengali employee of the Ramgarh indigo concern. (Reports, Archæological Survey, India, Vols. I and XVI; Report, Archæological Survey, Bengal Circle, 1901-02.) These ruins are now being taken over by the Government of India to be preserved by the Archæological Department.

**Lalsaraiya.**—An indigo factory in the Bettiah subdivision about 5 miles from Segauli station. It was built as an outwork of Turcawlia about 1822. In 1846, according to local report, the place was sold to G. Falkner for a thousand maunds of oats. Later on it was bought by Mr. James Macleod, well known for his hospitality and his hard riding. He kept racing stables and his colours at one



time were quite well known on the Turf in India. He built the outwards Raighat, Furrwah and Madhupur. The two latter are now uninhabited. Lalsaraiya has now ceased to grow indigo.

**Lauriya Araraj.**—A village in the west of the headquarters subdivision, situated 4 miles north of Gobindgunj thana on the road from that place to Motihari. It contains one of the lofty stone columns erected by Asoka in 249 B.C. The pillar, which bears in well-preserved and well-cut letters six of his edicts, is a single block of polished sandstone,  $36\frac{1}{2}$  feet in height above the ground, with a base diameter of 41.8 inches and a diameter at the top of 37.6 inches. The weight of this portion only is very nearly 34 tons, but as there must be several feet of the shaft sunk in the earth, the actual weight of the whole block must be about 40 tons. This pillar has no capital, although there can be little, if any, doubt that it must once have been crowned with a statue of some animal. The edicts of Asoka are most clearly and neatly engraved, and are divided into two distinct portions, that to the north containing 18 lines, and that to the south 23 lines. They are in a good state of preservation, but the northern face of the pillar has suffered from the effects of the weather, and looks quite black, while the polish, which is beautifully preserved elsewhere, has disappeared. This ancient pillar has not escaped the vandals, one of the first of whom was Reuben Burrow, a distinguished mathematician and astronomer, and one of the earliest members of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, who had his name inscribed on it. This appears to be a favourite amusement of the scientist, for we also find his name chiselled on the Asoka pillars at Basarh and Lauriya Nandangarh. In each case the date is the same 1792, the year of his death. The villagers call the pillar *laur*, i.e. the *phallus*, and the adjoining village is named after it Lauriya; here there is a temple of Mahadeo, one mile south-west of the pillar, which is the site of a large annual fair. (Reports, Archaeological Survey, India, Vol. I.)

**Lauriya Nandangarh.**—A village in the Bettiah subdivision about 16 miles north-west of Bettiah, which contains some of the most interesting remains in the district viz. the Lion Pillar of Asoka, and some ancient sepulchral mounds. The following account of the pillar, which stands



less than half a mile to the east of the village, is given by General Cunningham:—"Its shaft is formed of a single block of polished sandstone, 32 feet and  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches in height, with a diameter at base of 35.5 inches and of 26.2 inches at top. The capital, which is 6 feet 10 inches in height, is bell-shaped, with a circular abacus supporting the statue of a lion. The abacus is ornamented with a row of Brahmani geese pecking their food. The column has a light and elegant appearance, and is altogether a much more pleasing monument than the shorter and stouter pillar of Bakhra. The lion has been injured in the mouth, and the column itself bears the round mark of a cannon shot just below the capital, which has itself been slightly dislodged by the shock. One has not far to seek for the name of the probable author of this mischief. By the people, the outrage is ascribed to the Musalmans, and on the pillar itself in beautifully-cut Persian characters, is inscribed the name of Mahiuddin Muhammad Aurangzeb Padshah Alamgir Ghazi, San 1071. This date corresponds with A.D. 1660-61 which was the fourth year of the reign of the bigoted Aurangzeb, and the record may probably have been inscribed by some zealous follower in Mr. Jumla's army, which was then on its return from Bengal, after the death of the Emperor's brother Shuja.

"The pillar is much thinner and much lighter than those of Bakhra and Araraj. The weight of the polished portion of its shaft is only 18 tons, or rather less than half that of the Bakhra pillar, and somewhat more than half that of the Araraj pillar. The pillar is inscribed with the edicts of Asoka in the same clear and beautifully-cut characters as those of the Araraj pillar. The two inscriptions, with only a few trifling variations, correspond letter for letter. The Nandan-garh pillar has been visited by the numerous travellers, as it stands on the direct route from Bettiah to Nepal. There are a few unimportant inscriptions in modern Nagari, the oldest being dated in *Sambat 1566 Chait Badi 10* equivalent to A.D. 1509. One of them, without date, refers to some petty royal family, Nripa Narayan Suta Nripa Amara Singh, i.e. king Amar Singh, the son of king Narayana. The only English inscription is the name of Rn Burrow 1792."

The pillar itself has now become an object of worship as a *phallus* or lingam, and the offerings of sweetmeats and fruits are made before it by the villagers, who call it Bhim Singh's staff (*lathi*). There are no traces of any buildings



near it, but there are two fine banyan trees close by, one to the north and the other to the south. The pillar, now over 2,000 years' old, is in excellent preservation, and its massiveness and exquisite finish furnish striking proof of the skill and resource of the masons of the Asoka's age.

About three-quarters of a mile west of the pillar and half a mile south-west of the village of Lauriya is a huge detached mound, called Nandangarh, which commands an extensive view over the well-wooded country on every side. This mound, which stands about 80 feet high is composed of bricks, some of which measure about 24 inches in length by 12 inches in breadth and  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick. The space to the south was enclosed by a massive wall described as being 10 feet thick, and there are traces of the foundations of at least one small building on the top of the mound, which is about 250 to 300 feet square. It has been conjectured by Mr. V. A. Smith that this mound is the "Ashes stupa" in which the ashes of Budha's funeral pyre were enshrined. According to Buddhist tradition, after the cremation of Buddha's body at Kusinara, the fragments that remained were divided into eight portions. The Mauryas of Piplivanna sent an embassy claiming a share of the relics, but the envoys only arrived after the division had been made and had to be content with the ashes of the funeral pyre. Over these they built a great stupa, which is described by Hiuen Tsiang among others. It is impossible, however, to affirm this identification positively, until an adequate survey of the entire group of ruins is made and systematic excavations are carried out. Dr. Bloch, on the other hand, is inclined to believe that this huge brick mound was some kind of fortification or perhaps the citadel of an ancient city, and points out that round it the traces of an old ditch are still visible, and that the small brick buildings, of which there are traces on the terrace at the top, were perhaps watchtowers. It is open to question, however, whether the area on the top of the mound could accommodate a garrison or even a palace of any size. The mound is now thickly covered with jungles and trees, so that not even its shape can be made out; only a small path has been cut to the small plateau on the top. Local tradition says that Raja Janaka lived at Chankigarh (Jankigarh) 11 miles to the north while his sister was married in Lauriya, and that the site of her dwelling is called Nandangarh, because she was the *nanad* or husband's sister of the Raja's consort.



Even more curious are the earthen mounds, north of the village, on the western side of the Turkaha stream. There are 15 mounds arranged in three rows, one running from east to west and the other two from north to south, parallel to each other, an arrangement which seems to show that they were erected according to some definite plan. They are known to be of great age, a small punch-marked silver coin having been found in one of them, which is anterior to the time of Alexander the Great and may be as old as 1000 B.C. General Cunningham was of opinion that they were the sepulchral mounds of the early kings of the country prior to the rise and spread of Buddhism and that their date might be assumed as ranging from about 600 to 1000 B.C. They may, indeed, be the *chetiyanis* or *chaityas* alluded to by Buddha in a question addressed to his disciple Ananda about the Vrijjians. "Ananda" he said "hast thou heard that the Vrijjians, whatever the number may be of the Vrijjian *chetiyanis*, belonging to the Vrijjian (rulers) whether situated within or without (the city), they maintain respect, reverence and make offerings to them; and that they keep up without diminution the ancient offerings, the ancient observances, and the ancient sacrifices righteously made". The belief that they are *tumuli* or sepulchral barrows appears to have been confirmed by the discovery, about 40 years ago, of a leaden or iron coffin containing a human skeleton; while the more recent excavations of Dr. Bloch have shown without doubt that this belief is correct. The following account of these excavations is taken with some abbreviations from the 1904-05.

The mounds are arranged in three rows of five each, varying in height from 50 to 20 feet. The first row runs from east to west; a little to the north between the first and second mounds in this row, stands the famous Asoka column with the lion capital. Then follow two parallel rows from north to south. The fourth mound from the north in the eastern one of these two rows is the place where the iron or leaden coffin with a human skeleton was discovered. The place of the fourth mound in the western one of the north to south rows is occupied by a cluster of five small mounds only a few feet in height and hardly distinguishable from the fields round them. Their shape is now more or less conical, but it is probable that originally they were hemispherical and



that the action of the rain water has washed off a good deal of the earth from the top and thus changed their forms. There is generally round a base a large accumulation of yellow clay, the material used for building the mounds. This yellow clay, of which all the mounds have been made, is quite different from the white soil of the surrounding fields, and it is evident that it must have been imported from somewhere else. Time has made it almost as hard as stone, and to dig through the mounds is consequently slow work. There seems no doubt that the earth used in building the mounds has been taken from the bed of the Gandak, about 10 miles distant, numerous pebbles found imbedded in the clay leaving no doubt as to its real origin. A further peculiarity is that in three of the mounds opened the clay had been put up in thin layers with straw and leaves laid between them. In digging through the mounds, the earth broke off in flat cakes of a few inches thickness, showing on both sides clear marks of straw having been put between the layers of clay. The layers evidently consisted of broad strata raised one upon the other through the entire width of the mound, and no signs were found of their having been made by unburnt bricks.

Excavations were carried on by Dr. Bloch in four of the mounds. In the first mound opened a small deposit of human bones was found, mixed up with burnt wood, and a small gold leaf with a figure of a female stamped on it. This mound is the third from the north in the western line of the rows running from north to south. It is one of the highest of the mounds, its height exceeding 50 feet. In the centre was a hollow shaft, which had obviously been filled by a thick post of *sal* wood, of which the stump was left, the remainder having been eaten up by white ants. The second mound opened was the first from the north in the eastern line of the rows, which yielded very little of interest. There was no deposit of bones, except animal bones turned up here and there, but in the centre were found a great number of pieces of corroded iron. It is possible that they formed parts of a pillar running through the centre of the mound, like the wooden post in the first mound above. In the third mound opened, viz., the second in the western line of the rows, a deposit of human bones was found and a gold leaf with a female figure stamped upon it exactly like that found in the first mound. Here too was discovered the opening of a hollow shaft. The last mound opened was the



third from the north in the eastern line of mounds aligned north and south, but in this no remains were found.

Dr. Bloch gives the following explanation of the use to which these mounds were put :—The explanation of the facts revealed by my excavations will be found in the ancient Indian burial customs, described to us in the *Sutras* and *Prayogas* dealing with the ritual. Their rules have been collected together and explained in Dr. Caland's well-known work, *Die alterthümlichen Todten- und Bestattungs-gebräuche* (*Verhandelingen der koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen to Amsterdam*, 1896). According to this excellent publication, the disposal of the dead in ancient India was divided into four separate acts, viz. (1) cremation; (2) collecting the bones of the cremated person and depositing them in an urn (*asthi sanchayana*); (3) expiation (*santikarma*); and (4) erection of the funeral monument (*smasana-chit*, *lostachiti*). The fourth act is optional only, and is done some time after the bones have been deposited in the funeral urn and placed in the field under a tree. The urn is then taken out, and after the bones have been washed and several other ceremonies have been performed, they are placed upon the earth, the urn is broken and thrown away, and a funeral monument (*smasana*) is erected over the bones by piling up layers of bricks or clay. The height of such a grave generally does not appear to have exceeded that of a human body and its shape was some form of a quadrangle. However, both Apastamba and Hiranyakesin also mention round *smasana*, like the mounds at Lauriya. In building up the *smasana* we find a Vedic verse employed where a post (*sthana*) is mentioned. The meaning of this is not quite clear from the context or from the ritual, but I think the discovery of the two wooden posts, in two of the mounds above which the bones were deposited, shows that it refers to a similar custom, according to which a pillar was erected in the centre of the funeral monument and the bones placed above its top. The verse may be thus translated :—“ I raise the earth round thee; that I lay down this lump of earth, should not do me any harm. May the manes hold this pillar for thee, and may Jama prepare a seat for thee in the other world ”. Again in another verse recited at the same occasion it is said “ The piled up earth may stand firmly, may it be supported by thousand pillars ”.

“ That there is a connection between the first and the third mounds at Lauriya and the *smasana* described to us



in the Vedic ritual cannot, I think, be doubted. The only difference is the height of the Lauriya mounds. The straw placed between the layers of clay at Lauriya even reminds one of the bushels of grass that are put upon the *smasana*, and as regards the gold leaf we must remember that pieces of gold are placed upon the openings of the dead body before it is cremated. Whether the second and the last mounds have served the same purpose as the first and the third is not quite clear. It is possible that they were erected as monuments of persons whose funeral urns could not be found. This case is provided for in the ritual, and it is prescribed that some earth then should be taken out from the spot, where the urn was supposed to have been deposited, and laid down instead of the bones. We may also think of the rules referring to persons who died on a journey and whose bodies could not be found. It is, however, likewise possible that the second and the third mounds merely served some purpose in connection with the cremation, which invariably was performed on the same place where the *smasana* was put up later.

“ It is curious to find that Asoka erected one of his pillars close to a *smasana*, the haunt of ghosts and evil spirits in later times. The explanation of this is not difficult to find. Evidently these funeral monuments probably containing the remains of the royal persons, formed an object of worship, as we find adoration of the *chaityas* or funeral monuments of Chakravarttins or kings mentioned in the ancient Buddhist literature. The worship of stupas by Buddhists and Jains is nothing but an adoption of this popular form of grave worship. As a place which annually attracted large gatherings from far away, Asoka could not have selected a more suitable spot for the promulgation of his moral precepts. We thus have in the Lauriya mounds an intermediate form between the *smasana* and the Buddhist stupa or *chaitna*. That their date is anterior to Asoka's pillar seems highly probable, but I cannot say for how many centuries. It is a great pity that they yielded so little in the way of antiquarian finds. Only broken fragments of pottery and stone vessels turned up. The gold leaves may be looked upon as specimens of the ancient *nishka* pieces of gold worn as ornaments and used as coins likewise. The ancient *smasana* was to the north of the town or village, and the mounds of Lauriya likewise lie north of the Nandan-garh, which may have been the citadel of an ancient city that once existed at that place.”



At a distance of from  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 6 miles to the west of Lauriya Nandangarh, and both along and between two old river channels, hundreds of small grass-covered mounds or *tumuli*, varying from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet to 8 feet in height, are scattered here and there over the undulating grassy plain. These barrows are mostly of a subconical shape but some few are shaped like a cup or a bowl turned upside down. The majority are situated near or along the banks of an old river bed, which divides into two branches to the west of Lauriya, the eastern or larger branch being called the Harha, and the western branch the Mausohimakhand. It is noticeable also that the great barrows of Lauriya are situated near the northern bank of the Turkaha and only about two-thirds of a mile to the south of another larger river. There was probably a purpose in this, as water had to be near at hand for the ablutions connected with the cremation of corpses, the ashes being afterwards deposited in the mounds close by (Reports, Archæological Survey of India, Vols. I, XVI and XXII; Reports, Archæological Survey, Bengal Circle, 1901-02 and 1904-05; V. A. Smith, Kusinara and other Buddhist Holy places, Journal, Royal Asiatic Society, 1902.)

**Lowriah** is also important from the administrative point of view. There is a police-station and a district board hospital there and the Pakri sugar factory is quite close. Lowriah was previously an indigo concern and now the village with a few neighbouring villages are in *thikadari* lease to Miss Moore under the Bettiah Estate.

**Madanpur.**—A place in the Bettiah subdivision situated on the bank of the Gandak, 10 miles north of Bagaha. Tradition says that Madanpur was formerly the palace of a king; it is now an almost impenetrable jungle, but there are many curious old brick remains similar to those found at Darwabari and in the north-west corner of the district. A small footpath leads to a shrine in the midst of the jungle, where lives an old *Sannyasi*, who never leaves his jungle retreat, but waits patiently for the villagers to bring him food. These jungles were the asylum of the Magahiya Doms before the present settlements were founded.

**Madhuban.**—A village in the south-east corner of the headquarters subdivision, situated 20 miles south-east of Motihari, and 5 miles north-east of the Chakia railway station. The village contains a police-station, a district board dispensary



and the residence of one of the most influential zamindar families of the district. The founder of the family was Abdhut Singh, the great-grandson of Raja Ugra Sen Singh, the founder of the Bettiah Raj, with whom tappa Duho-Suho and the villages of Madhuban and Shampur were settled as *nankar* in the time of Mir Kasim Ali Khan. At that time the family residence was in the village of Madhubani, 8 miles east of Motihari, but his grandson, Har Prasad Singh, removed it to Madhuban, where his descendants have remained ever since. The estate is one of the largest in Champaran, having an area of 50,000 acres and an annual income of Rs. 2 lakhs. A large fair is held annually in the village in the month of *Asin* and lasts for 25 days. Large numbers attend it, and a brisk trade is carried on in the sale and purchase of cattle, horses and miscellaneous goods.

The estate in recent years has run into debt, and as a result the major portion has been recently mortgaged to the Maharajadhiraja of Darbhanga to pay off debts.

**Mehsi.**—A village in the south of the headquarters subdivision situated 26 miles south-east of Motihari, near the main road from that place to Muzaffarpur and now the head-quarter of a union board. The village is said to have been the Sadr or chief civil station in Champaran, when the East India Company first acquired possession of it, and a munsif's court was for a time located there: the remains of a court house and one of the European bungalows are still visible. The place is noted for a strong flavoured tobacco, the seed of which is said to have been imported by one of the European officers stationed there, and also for strong and durable carpets (*daris* and *satranjis*) woven by the local weavers. Under the Muhammadans the village was long the seat of a Muhammadan Kazi, and gave its name to the pargana of Mehsi, which was granted to one Mahrum Khan by the Emperor Akbar.

The name Mehsi is accounted for by a quaint legend. It is believed that there was a Hindu *sadhu*, by name Mahesh Koiri, whose distinguishing characteristic was that he lived solely on milk. One Halim Shah, a Muhammadan ruler, having turned *fakir*, came from the west to see the Hindu *sadhu*, and was astounded to see him extract milk from a heifer for his refreshment. Needless to say, the Muhammadan magnate was much impressed by Mahesh Koiri's accomplishment and caused the tract to be named after him. To this



day the village contains a Hindu shrine and a Musalman *dargah*, which were built side by side under the express orders of Halim Shah, and all who would show honour to the one are asked to show equal honour to the other. Many miraculous feats are attributed to Halim Shah and his power to perform miracles is believed to have remained even after his death. It is said that when a Kalwar once attempted to tap a date-palm near the *dargah*, in order to obtain the juice for the manufacture of intoxicating drink, which is forbidden to Muhammadans, blood flowed from the tree. There is also a tradition that there was formerly an inscribed stone at the gate of the tomb, with the magic aid of which thieves could be unerringly detected and stolen property recovered. Jang Bahadur, says the legend, removed this stone to Nepal, and when the saint remonstrated, promised to erect a cenotaph in his memory. This original *dargah* is a great place of pilgrimage, and an annual fair is held there, at which some thousands attend. It is visited by persons for all sorts of purposes, but mainly by those who desire to be blessed with children or who are suffering from some lingering disease.

**Motihari town.**—The headquarters of the district situated in  $26^{\circ} 40' N$  and  $84^{\circ} 55' E$ . Motihari is picturesquely situated on the bank of a lake (*man*) which at one time formed a reach in the course of the Gandak. The river at this point has left two horse-shoe bends, which originally formed the neck of a loop in its channel, and the town is situated on the north side of the western bend. These two lakes never entirely dry up, and the depth in the rainy season is over 20 feet in places; but in the hot weather there is not more than two to three fathoms of water at any point. The head of the loop towards the south has silted up and is now under cultivation. In the rains, water is let in from the Gandak river on the north by a canal constructed by the Motihari Factory, and there is a small channel joining the two lakes, which keeps the water fresh. The western lake divides Motihari into two distinct portions. To the west are the European quarter and native town and to the east are the various public offices and the railway station, beyond which again are the old race course and the present polo ground. Adjoining the latter is the jail, erected about 20 years ago, on a standard plan, according to which the dormitories form the upper storey of the building, the basement of which contains the labour wards. A bund (*badh*) or embankment



was built some 25 years ago in order to connect the town and European quarter with the court buildings, which are situated near the station.

Leaving the station by the road towards the bund, which is a beautiful avenue of mahogany trees, one passes the post office on the right and dak bungalow and police lines on the left. Almost opposite the police lines is the Circuit House—a large two-storied building. Quite close to the Circuit House are the court houses and offices built in 1882, also the Bar Library and the district board office built in 1914. The Sub-divisional Officer's bungalow and the armoury and Bihar Light Horse Sergeant-Instructor's bungalow are also near. Opposite the courts on the left of the road is the new Mangal seminary, a high English school which was completed in 1930. Further on on the right is the entrance to the Superintendent of Police's bungalow, and just before the bund, the judge's court, a fine building which was completed in 1929. Crossing the bund there is a picturesque view of the town above the lake on the left and on the right the lake curves away past the buildings of the old Motihari factory which is now the residence of the Bettiah Raj Circle Officer. At the end of the bund is a road leading on the left to the police-station and the bazar, and on the right a fine avenue leading past the English Church, the Bank of Bihar and the Co-operative Bank to the Collector's house the planters' and Gymkhana clubs and various other bungalows. The Collector's house which was originally built as a residence for one of the Maharanis of Bettiah is on the banks of the eastern lake. From the terrace to the south of the bungalow there is a fine view over the lake. The compound includes a stretch of maidan where are now the remains of the club golf course.

Opposite the Collector's house is a road running through the village of Chitauni to Dhaka, and to the left, after passing through Mathia Tola we come to the municipal garden with a large tank in the centre adorned with two fine bathing ghats built by a wealthy *mahajan* of the town. A little further on is the cemetery, containing monuments recording the names of many well-known planting families of Bihar and a stone obelisk, erected in 1864 by the residents of the district, to the memory of Major Holmes and his wife, Dr. Gardiner (spelt Gardnier in the inscription), his wife and child, whose murder by the mutineers at Sugauli in 1857 has been mentioned



in Chapter II. After leaving the cemetery the road leads on to Chauradano and Nepal.

Motihari has three high English schools for boys, i.e. Schools. the zila school, Mangal seminary and Heycock academy. There are also two middle English schools for boys, one of which is Bengali.

There is only one school for girls—an upper primary purdah school, in which a little English is taught.

In addition to the police and jail hospitals there is a Hospital. fine hospital which has recently been enlarged and one veterinary hospital.

*Motihari factory*, now a Raj circle, was one of the oldest Motihari indigo factories in the district being built by Mr. C. Moran factory. in 1817. Mr. Moran died in 1851 and his grave is in the factory compound. The factory was sold by Mr. Irwin, Manager for many years in 1928 and the bungalow is now occupied by the Bettiah Raj Circle Officer.

The Motihari Tannery Company went bankrupt some Motihari years ago and the factory has been idle ever since, but is Tannery. now being converted into a sugar mill having been bought last year by a Calcutta Company. At Motihari is the district headquarters of the Regions Beyond Mission which is inter-denominational. For many years the Rev. J. Z. Hodge, who took a prominent part in the social and public life of Motihari, was in charge of the Mission.

Outstations of the Mission have been established at Chainpatia and Harnatand in the Bettiah subdivision.

**Motihari subdivision.**—The Headquarters subdivision situated between  $26^{\circ} 16'$  and  $27^{\circ} 1'$  N and  $84^{\circ} 30'$  and  $85^{\circ} 18'$  E with an area of 1,518 square miles. The subdivision consists of an alluvial tract, in which the land is level, fertile and highly cultivated. The river Sikrahna, known in its lower reaches as the Burh Gandak, traverses this tract from north-west to south-east. The soil in the portion to the north of this river, comprising an area of approximately two-fifths of the subdivision, is a strong clay known locally as *bangar*, yielding very heavy rice crops in years of sufficient rainfall or in localities where irrigation can be carried on. South of the river the soil is mainly a light sandy loam not so suitable for rice, but yielding good crops of maize and various cold weather crops, such as wheat, barley, mustard, linseed, etc. Its population was 1,040,599 in 1901 as



compared with 1,099,600 in 1891. The slight decrease was due to the famine of 1897 which stimulated emigration and diminished the fecundity of the people. The present population (1931) is 1,238,789. There are 816 persons to the square mile, or nearly twice as many as in the Bettiah subdivision.

**Narkatiaganj.**—See Shikarpur..

**Nonachar.**—An old fort in the headquarters subdivision, situated on the north bank of the Sikrahna, 5 miles north-east of Motihari. The remains consist of an oblong raound, divided into four smaller sections by two roads running through it, one in each direction. At the place where they meet, an ancient tank exists, which is now silting up. All the four sides of each of the four smaller sections seem to have been protected by walls which are covered with thick jungle. Local legend says that the fort is named after its former ruler, one Nonachar Dusadh, who is the hero of a quaint legend regarding the Subhegarh fort in the Muzaffarpur district. Subhegarh, it is said, was the palace of Raja Suhel De, who was the last of his race, having only one child, a beautiful daughter, named Subahi Devi. After her father's death, she was sought in marriage by many princes, but she refused to marry any one, and at last only consented to marry a man who should be able to count all the palm trees in the fort. At that time the whole place was covered with palm trees, and the task of counting them seemed impossible. Many princes tried and failed, but Nonachar succeeded by first tying a piece of string round every palm tree, which is said to have occupied him some months; and when no tree could be found without a string, he took off all the strings and counted them. He then claimed the hand of the princess, but she was so overcome with shame at the thought of being married to a man of such a low caste that she prayed that the earth should open and swallow her up. Her prayer was heard, and the earth at once opened under her.

**Parsa.**—A village in Bettiah subdivision contains an old indigo factory built sometime in the sixties; though indigo is no longer grown or manufactured, the concern owns the Pakri Sugar mill, grows a considerable amount of cane and is a large *thikadar* under the Bettiah Estate.

**Patjirwa.**—A village in the Bettiah subdivision situated 8 miles west of Bettiah. The village contains a shrine



of extreme sanctity, which is said to have been erected by a chief called Durbijja Singh, whose wife and children committed *sati* after he and his sons had been killed in a fight. From that time onwards, in order to honour his memory, it has been laid down that within the tappa of Patjirwa none should sleep on a *charpai* or build a house of masonry. With such awe do the natives regard this shrine that it is said that they will not, within the whole of that tappa, build any house of masonry; and the death of a former Subdivisional Officer of Bettiah, who committed suicide, is attributed to the fact that he had his tent pitched on the site of the shrine.

**Peeprah.**—A village in the headquarters subdivision about 9 miles from Motihari. Peeprah factory was built by the Dutch and was sold to the Bettiah Raj and is now a Raj circle.

**Pipariya.**—See Rampurwa.

**Ramnagar.**—A village in the Bettiah subdivision situated 30 miles to the north-west of Bettiah. The village contains the residence of an ancient family of zamindars, who trace back their descent to Ratan Singh of Chitor, who migrated to Nepal, where he and his descendants carved out a small principality for themselves. Raja Mukund Singh, the sixth in descent from Ratan Singh, divided the territory over which he ruled among his four sons. Prithvi Pal Singh became Raja of Butwal, Langi Singh, Raja of Makwanpur, and Raj Singh was Raja of Rajpur, while another son, Burangi Singh, is described as being Raja of "the mountains of Telhoni or Telahu". It is from this Raja that the Ramnagar family is descended. Owing, it is said, to the oppression of the king of Nepal, the head of this branch took refuge in "the lowlands of the mountains of Tribeni" and established himself at Ramnagar, where the family have remained ever since. They own one of the largest estates in the district, including the Sumeswar hills and the once valuable forests on them. The title of Raja was first conferred by the Emperor Alam in 1676 and was confirmed by the British Government in 1860.

The late Raja having no sons adopted Shree Panch Mohan Bikram Shah *alias* Rama Raja during his lifetime. As he made three wills since he died, there has been a long dispute



between the Rani, his widow, and the Rama Raja for possession of the estate. The case went up to the Privy Council and the Rani won it and is now in possession and lives at Ramnagar.

**Rampurwa.**—A village situated near the village of Pipariya, 32 miles north of Bettiah and 4 miles to the south of the Sumeswar Hills, in the extreme north-east of the Bettiah subdivision. Less than half a mile to the west of the village, and near the eastern bank of a stream called the Harbora, is one of the edict pillars erected by Asoka, which was discovered about 30 years ago by Mr. Carlleyle of the Archæological Survey of India. He learnt of its existence from some Tharus, who told him that, in the locality which they frequented in the Tarai there was a stone in the ground like the pillar at Lauriya, which they called Bhim's Lath. The Rampurwa pillar is similar to that of Lauriya Nandangarh in the dimensions of the diameter of the shaft at top, viz.  $26\frac{1}{4}$  inches; it is impossible to measure the diameter of the base as it is buried in the ground much below the water level. As in the case of that pillar both the shaft and capital are composed of highly polished sandstone, and the capital has a circular abacus ornamented with a row of geese pecking their food. It was originally surmounted with the figure of a lion, but this has disappeared, only the feet and part of the legs being left. The edicts on the pillar are, word for word, the same as those on the pillars at Lauriya Araraj and Lauriya Nandangarh. Its base, a shattered stupa, 6 feet high, still stands *in situ*, midway between two low earthen mounds covered with brick fragments, evidently the remains of some Buddhistic monuments. The greater portion of the shaft now lies within a swamp, almost entirely under water, some 800 or 1,000 feet to the north of its base; evidently an attempt was made to remove it, but was given up on account of the difficulty and costliness of the task. Close to it stands the capital, which was disconnected from the shaft by Mr. Garrick in 1881, in order to take a photograph of it. These two masses of stone were connected by a solid bolt of pure copper,  $24\frac{1}{2}$  inches long, both ends of which show that even in the age of Asoka era Hindus had discovered the destructive properties of iron when used as a fastening for stones. It is in contemplation to restore the fallen column to its original position. To the north-east and west of the pillar, there are the remains of some brick ruins buried in the ground.



The Tharus of the neighbourhood tell a curious story to account for the origin of the broken base of the pillar standing between the two mounds. They say that Bhim was carrying two loads of earth in two baskets suspended from a pole across his shoulder; when he reached this spot, the pole broke, and the two loads of earth consequently fell down on the ground on either side, and thus formed the two mounds; while the broken pole stuck in the ground in the midst, and became petrified, and thus formed the broken pillar. It has been suggested that the destruction of this pillar like the injury done to that at Lauriya Nandangarh, is due to some zealous followers of the army of Mir Jumla, which was then on its way back from Bengal after the defeat of Sultan Shuja, the brother of Aurangzeb. (Reports, Archæological Survey, India, Vols. XVI and XXII; Report, Archæological Survey, Bengal Circle, 1901-02).

**Raxaul.**—A village in the extreme north-east of the district on the Nepal frontier. It contains a police-station and a railway station which is the junction for the Bengal and North-Western railway and the Nepal light railway. There is a bungalow belonging to the Resident of Nepal, and the town of Birgunj, which is the headquarters of the Nepalese zila of Bara is two miles away across the border. There are three rice-mills and much traffic from Nepal passes through the village. A medical mission has recently been established there and has a fully qualified doctor and a trained nurse.

**Sagardih.**—A mound situated close to the village of Sagar in the headquarters subdivision, 13 miles to the south of Motihari and at a distance of 4 miles from Pipra on the road to Kesariya. The mound, which undoubtedly marks the remains of a Buddhistic stupa, is 37 feet high with a circular base nearly 200 feet in diameter; but it is now thickly overgrown with jungle, so that it is difficult to form an accurate idea of its original shape. The excavations made by General Cunningham have shown, however, that the stupa stands on a paved terrace raised 20 feet above the ground. He was of opinion that it was built over the remains of an older stupa which had become a ruin. Between the foundations, and in the very midst of the remains of the earlier stupa he found the roots of a palm tree still preserving their original upright position, from which he concluded that the ruins of the old stupa must have been overgrown with jungle before the mediæval stupa was built, and



that the trees were cleared away and the ruins levelled to receive its foundations, leaving the roots of this single palm embedded in the bricks of the older stupa. From the general appearance, as well as from the relative proportions of height and diameter, General Cunningham concluded that it must be a mediæval building, probably of the 9th or 10th century A.D. The former stupa must have been several centuries older, as a long time must have elapsed before it became so completely ruined that only its foundation was left, to be overgrown with palm trees. The great paved platform, 20 feet high and 175 feet in diameter, on which the present stupa was erected, must date back to the same time. It was faced with a wall of brick all round, and as the bricks of this wall were all of the smaller size found in the later stupa, the wall itself is most probably of the same age.

The mound which is called Bhisā, i.e. simply the mound, is attributed to Raja Sagara the solar hero, and is therefore also known locally as Sagargarh or Sagara's castle. It stands on an elevated piece of ground, 500 feet long by 300 feet broad, on the eastern bank of an oblong sheet of water called Gaya Pokhar. A short distance to the south-east there is a fine large tank 1,000 feet square which is called simply Pokhar or the tank, and sometimes Baudha Pokhar, a name which seems to point to the Buddhistic stupa close by. Its position in the midst of a vast plain of low-lying rice-fields is not an inviting one, as the country all round it must be a wide swamp in the rainy season.

On the eastern embankment of the Baudha Pokhar, there is a small shrine of the *Gram Devata*, or village godling, before which the villagers make offerings of flowers and sacrifice a young goat or sheep. At the foot of the mound stands a small brick tomb of a Muhammadan saint, Ghulam Husain Shah, who is more commonly known by the name of Mallang or the madman. It is a small brick building, only  $13\frac{1}{2}$  feet square, but it has 15 bighas of land attached to it, and is about 100 years old. A few hundred feet to the east there are two bridges on the high road, one of them with six piers and two abutments, built of materials taken from the old stupa on the mound 50 years ago, when the road was being made. There is no tradition connected with the Sagardih, except the common story told at many other places that travellers used to find cooking posts lying ready for their use, but an avaricious



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Baniya having carried off some on his pony, the cooking vessels have never been seen since. This probably dates back to the old Buddhist times when travellers received hospitality in the monasteries. (Reports, Archæological Survey, India, Vol. XVI; Report, Archæological Survey, Bengal Circle, 1901-02.)

**Shikarpur** with a railway station Narkatiagunj is a large village about 25 miles north of Bettiah. Messrs. Birla & Co. are now building a large sugar mill near the station and hope to start crushing next season. There is a police thana, a sub-registry office, a district board dispensary, a district board dak bungalow and a good Sanskrit school. The village also has an important bazaar and has large weekly markets and is of growing importance.

**Singhasani.**—A village in the headquarters subdivision, situated 7 miles to the north of Segauli, a short distance to the east of the Gadh river. Half a mile to the west of the village is a large mound, 130 feet long by 100 feet broad covered with broken bricks, to which the villagers give the name of Unchadih. This mound is believed to be the remains of an old fort, and has 4 larger mounds at the 4 corners, which may have been bastions but are more likely the foundations of towers. A road about 14 feet broad leads up to the north face of the mound, which contained the entrance to the fort. This road passes right through it and can be traced for nearly half a mile in a south-westerly direction; it is occasionally used by bullock cart-drivers travelling from one village to another with their wares. The villagers have no traditions concerning these remains, except that they mark a ruined fort. Mr. Garrick was of opinion, however, that "the name of this village would almost show it to have been at some remote period directly connected with royalty or the seat of Government. Perhaps a capital city once stood on this site, albeit, in the early history of India, there were such a plurality of petty chiefs governing small tracts of country that the existence of a throne (*singhasan*) did not always tell of a large city". (Reports, Archæological Survey, India, Vol. XVI.)

**Sitakund.**—A village in the headquarters subdivision, situated near the Pipra railway station, 10 miles to the south-east of Motihari and half a mile to the north of Madhuban on the Sikrahna river. The village contains the remains of an ancient fort the shape of which is an irregular square,



450 feet long on each side, with large round bastions at the corners and in the middle of each face. The ramparts of the fort are formed of two separate brick walls with  $8\frac{1}{2}$  feet of earth filled in between them; the outer brick wall is 10 feet thick, and the inner one 3 feet, so that the total thickness of the rampart is  $21\frac{1}{2}$  feet. On the east, west and south there was a single entrance, and on the north there were apparently two gates; but the rampart on this face is nearly obliterated so that one can only make a guess at the position of the gates by the depressions on the edge of the mound. The brick walls are still from 10 to 12 feet in height, but they must have been much higher originally; as the earthen rampart is generally about 20 feet in height, the whole height of the rampart with its parapet could not have been less than 30 or even 35 feet. In some places, on the west and north, there are traces of a moat. Altogether the Sitakund fort must have been a place of some strength when guns were unknown, and the thick lofty walls could only be attacked by escalade.

Inside the fort is a holy tank, to which the name Sitakund peculiarly applies as Sita, the wife of Rama, bathed there. It is a deep circular pond surrounded by brick walls with four ghats leading down to it. A great *mela* is held there on the Ramnavami when several thousands of pious Hindus assemble to do honour to Rama and Sita. There are several temples and shrines round it; the principal temple, which stands near the western side of the tank, is a whitewashed building with octagonal turrets at the four corners and a domed roof. It enshrines 8 well-preserved images, viz. images of Surjya, Hanuman and Vishnu; an image of Ravana, with 20 arms and 10 heads, five of which only are shown on the carving; another of Mahishamardini or Durga in the act of killing a buffalo demon; and two images of Ganesh, one seated with 4 arms and one dancing with 8 arms. On the southern rampart of this fort, close to the middle bastion, there are two small places of worship under trees, one dedicated to Garh Devi and the other to Baran Bir; the former is a tutelary goddess of the fort, and the latter a defied ghost or the spirit of a man who met a violent death. On the top of the western rampart, immediately opposite the principal temple, and under the shade of a magnificent tree, there is a small terrace called *Jogi-ka-baithak* or the hermit's seat; and in the northern part of the fort there are a few tombs (*samadhs*) of Hindu ascetics (*Jogis*). (Reports, Archaeological Survey, India, Vol. XVI.)



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**Sugauli.**—A village in the headquarters subdivision nearly half-way between Bettiah and Motihari, is the headquarters of a union board and contains a police thana, a district board dispensary, a district board bungalow and a railway station. It has considerable historical interest as it is the place where the Nepalese treaty of 1815 was signed, and was the headquarters of General Ochterlony during the last Nepalese war. Cantonments were built there after the Nepalese war and were occupied in the Mutiny of 1857 by the 12th Regiment of Irregular Horse, commanded by Major Holmes. As soon as the first symptoms of unrest appeared in Bihar Major Holmes declared for prompt and vigorous repression but up to the last he had complete confidence in the loyalty of his own men. This confidence was misplaced and he and his wife were murdered one day in July when they were out driving. The remaining Europeans at Sugauli were all murdered except one little child. Traces of the cantonments may be seen to this day. A bund was built to protect them from inundation and near the banks of the river are a few remains of the Colonel's bungalow and the outline of his compound. Also there are traces of the officers' mess house and further away of the lines. There are villages near but none actually on the site which gives the impression of being a silent and haunted spot. Not far beyond the place of the Colonel's bungalow is a ruined palace built as a summer residence by one of the Maharajas of Bettiah, also a wonderful old well, which is very well preserved. There is also a fine temple standing in its own grounds on the banks of the Sikrana.

There is a small cemetery on the road from the ghat.

**Sumeswar.**—A fort in the Bettiah subdivision, situated on the summit of the Sumeswar hills, at a height of 2,884 feet above sea-level. The fort which stands on the edge of a sharp precipice, is now in ruins, but its remains are well defined, and reservoirs cut out of the solid rock, in which water was stored for the use of the inhabitants, can still be seen; a temple bell of remarkably sweet tone, which is an object of considerable veneration, also hangs in the ruins to the east of the fort. From the ridge upon which Fort Sumeswar is situated, a magnificent view of the snows and of the intervening valleys and low hills situated in Nepal can be seen; the ridge here forms the boundary between



Champaran and Nepal. An inspection bungalow has been erected about 200 feet below the crest of the ridge, and residents of the district occasionally reside there when they require change of air, as the temperature ranges about  $10^{\circ}$  lower than in the plains.

**Tribeni ghat.**—A beautiful spot in the extreme north-west of the district, where the Great Gandak first touches British territory. One side of the ghat is in Tribeni village in Nepal and the other side in the village of Bhaisalotan in British India. There is a rough but very picturesque road leading to it, which crosses the Tribeni canal at Sidhao and passes the old police outpost of Harnatanr. This road is used by bullock carts. About a mile and a half downstream from the ghat are the headworks of the Tribeni canal, and the P. W. D. dispensary and Inspection bungalow, which are reached by a very narrow but beautiful motor road along the canal bank. The name Bhaisalotan means the buffaloes wallow and is apparently derived from the fact that the place used to be the haunt of the wild buffaloes of the Terai. The view from the canal sluice gate, of the river, and the mountains is really most beautiful.

The name Tribeni means the three rivers, and is derived from the fact that three streams unite here soon after they quit the hills, viz. the Great Gandak, the Panchnad and the Sonaha. The place is considered sacred on this account, and also because it is believed to be the site at which the fight commenced between the lords of the forest and the water, Gaj and Garah, the elephant and the crocodile. According to the Srimat Bhagbat, there was in olden times a vast lake round the Trikut hill, which had, as the name implies, three towering peaks, crowned with dense forest and infested by wild animals. In this lake lived a crocodile of enormous size; and one day when a huge elephant came with a herd to bathe there, the crocodile caught him by the leg and tried to drag him into deeper water. The struggle continued for thousands of years, all the crocodiles and elephants joining in the contest. At last, the elephant, beginning to weaken, prayed to the supreme God, Hari, to help him. His prayer was heard, and Hari saved him from the grip of the crocodile in the presence of Hara and other gods. According to Hindu mythology, the crocodile had in a previous life been a Gandharva chief, named Huhu, and the elephant, a king of Pandya, Indradyumna by



name. A short way up the picturesque valley of the Gandak is the traditional site of the battle, where the people still point with awe and wonder to some deep holes in the limestone, some of which are the exact shape of the foot of an elephant, while others resemble the imprints of an alligator's foot. These curious holes are probably due to the action of water churning round some hard stone embedded in the limestone; but the people believe that they were made by the Gaj and Garah in the soft mud when the fight began, and then were turned into hard stone and will remain for ever. A large fair is held at the point where the Panchnad and Gandak meet at the time of *Magh Sankranti* in February, when a temporary village of grass huts springs up on a broad expanse of shingle in the river bed, and thousands of villagers flock in to bathe and trade. The site of the fair is half in Nepal and half in British territory, and an iron post marks the boundary. On the opposite side of the river in Tribeni itself a brisk trade is also carried on during the fair, one of the most conspicuous features of the bazaar at this time being piles of Nepalese oranges brought down for sale.

At the point where the district board road ends there is a temple built by the Bettiah Raj looking down upon the stream, and also the remains of an old traffic registration station. On the other side of the Panchnad are a Nepalese shrine and a police outpost in charge of a havildar. The Great Gandak forms the boundary between the two Nepalese Commissionerships of the Eastern and the Western Tarai, and the outpost on the other side of the Panchnad is under Birgunj while the outpost at Tribeni is under Butwal. A little way up the Panchnad, opposite the point where the Sonaha comes down, is a small shrine dedicated to Sita, as there is a tradition that it was here that Sita watched the fight between Rama and his sons Lava and Kusha. The beds of these two streams present some scenes of great natural beauty. A narrow limpid stream wanders from side to side between the shingle; on both sides the banks rise to a height of 50 to 100 feet covered with vegetation and crowned with leafy trees; and all round are hillocks with a thick growth of *sabai* grass.

Passing along the narrow bed of the Kalapani an ominous name given to a stream which flows into the Panchnad a short distance below its confluence with the Sonaha, we come to



a hill, on the top of which are the remains of the plinth of an old bungalow, now almost inaccessible through the growth of weeds and creepers. All round are dwarf trees, the leaves of which seem strangely familiar, for this is all that remains of a tea garden which Mr. Gibbon, Manager of the Bettiah Raj, tried to start many years ago; the place is now the home of sambhar and occasionally of tigers and leopards. Both the Panchnad and the Sonaha wash down small fragments of gold, and it is a common sight to see gold washers working at curious little dams of land in the beds of both streams.

**Turkaulia.**—Which was one of the largest indigo concerns in the district, is now a Bettiah Raj circle. A deed of July 12th 1816 records the purchase of Turkaulia by Mathew Moran and Henry Hill from William Wood, indigo planter of Mirzapur. The factory remained in the possession of the Hill family for over a hundred years, i.e. until it was sold to the Bettiah Raj in 1927-28.



## EARTHQUAKE.

### SUBSIDIARY CHAPTER.

#### AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE.

THE main chapters were revised before the earthquake, and the present short chapter has been added with the purpose of recording important permanent changes caused by the earthquake.

Champaran suffered severely from the earthquake of January 1934.

The epicentral tract stretching from Dhaka on the west to a point about 10 miles east of Madhubani on the east, included a small area only to the east of Dhaka in Champaran district. The slump area stretching from Purnea in the east to Sugauli on the west included the whole area east of a line drawn through Ghorasahan, Sugauli and Gobindganj.

In this area sand was forced up through fissures and geysers, levels were changed, and water channels were to some extent blocked with sand. The damage to land was specially severe near the banks of rivers and lakes where the ground was so badly fissured that rebuilding was a serious problem. Beyond the slump area damage to buildings was severe, but sites were generally safe for rebuilding.

2. The total death roll in the district caused by the earthquake was 499, Adapur police-station with 104 deaths and Dhaka police-station with 96 suffered most severely. Motihari town being built on the edge of the Lake suffered very severely from fissures, and in consequence the damage to buildings was severe. Many buildings were left standing but tilted at various angles, and though to outward appearance they seemed sound a closer examination showed that the masonry was shattered. Comparatively few buildings actually collapsed and for this reason, and because Motihari is not as congested as other towns the death roll was comparatively small; for only 78 deaths occurred in Motihari town and police-station as compared with a death roll of 956 in Muzaffarpur town and 1,260 in Monghyr town.



Twenty-two deaths were reported from Bettiah subdivision including 9 in Bettiah town and police-station.

*Damage to House Property.*—In Motihari the Church, the Collector's and Civil Surgeon's residences were destroyed, and many Government buildings partially collapsed and were severely damaged. The Bettiah Estate also suffered severely in Bettiah and throughout the district. A list of buildings owned by Government and the Bettiah Estate and other more important buildings which were damaged beyond repair is given below :—

*Government Buildings.*

*Motihari—*

Church,

District Jail and partly staff quarters,

Civil Court,

Collectorate main building and Garage and Hajat,

Zilla School and Hostel,

Registration Office,

Police-station and two out-posts and attached staff quarters,

Police constables' barracks, two sets,

Magazine and Magazine guards' quarters,

Police Hospital,

Deputy Collectors' quarters, one set,

Executive Engineer's office and residence,

Public Works Department Accountant's quarters,

Public Works Department Subdivisional Officer's residence,

Public Works Department Subdivisional Officer's office,

Circuit House,

European Armed Inspector's quarters,

Bettiah—Male Prisoners' barrack,

Munsiff's Court.



*Bettiah Estate Buildings.*

K. E. M. Hospital with out-buildings,  
First Assistant Manager's bungalow,  
Second Assistant Manager's bungalow,  
Palace buildings consisting of—  
Western Palace,  
Eastern or New Palace,  
Sish Mahal,  
Nepali quarters,  
Pathal Darwaza,  
Manager's office,  
Engineering office,  
Hostel attached to Raj High English School and  
out-houses,  
Girls' School,  
Headmaster's quarters,  
Electrical Engineer's quarters.  
Victoria Memorial Library.

*Temples—*

Sagar (Stone) temple,  
Durgabagh temple.  
Jora Sivalaya temple,  
Harbatika temple,  
Pucci Bowli temple,  
Ekadas Rura temple in Kalibagh,  
Bhawanimandap temple in Purani Gudri.



*Outside Bettiah.**Buildings—*

Circle Officer's bungalow, Peepra,  
Circle office, Peepra,  
Circle Officer's bungalow, Turkaulia,  
Circle office, Turkaulia,  
Circle Officer's bungalow, Motihari,  
Collector's bungalow, Motihari,  
Bansoria (Civil Surgeon's) bungalow, Motihari,  
Assistant Circle Officer's bungalow, Motihari,  
Law office, Motihari,  
Inspection bungalows at Adapur, Mirpur, Husseni,  
Sugaon and Hardia.

*Temples—*

Jagdishpur temple,  
Gurwalia temple,  
Utterbahini temple.

*Other buildings of interest.*

The Roman Catholic Church at Bettiah, the Old Planters' Club Bungalow and Gymkhana Club at Motihari, which have not been rebuilt. The Sadr Hospital, the Heycock Academy, the Bank of Bihar, the Mangal Seminary and the Motihari Mission House. In Motihari town also one of the two mosques was completely destroyed and the Birchhasthan including Thakurbari and Brahmsthan, Bishwakarma temple, and the Shivalaya were damaged beyond repair. District Board property also suffered severely; the Dak bungalow and the District Engineer's residence and many District Board schools and dispensaries collapsed. Of buildings of Archæological interest the stupa at Kessariya completely collapsed, while the Asoka pillars at Lauriya and Arreraj fortunately suffered no damage.



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It is difficult of course to estimate the damage to the house property of private persons: though the following figures give some idea of the widespread damage. Rs. 79,000 was given out in Natural Calamity Loans at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent and Rs. 1,27,000 at  $6\frac{1}{4}$  per cent, while the grants from the Viceroy's Earthquake Relief Fund to repairs of houses were Rs. 99,000 in the urban and Rs. 4,69,000 in the rural areas. In the latter area a large number of small grants were given for the repair of mud houses.

*Reconstruction of House Property.*—In Motihari the sites of Government buildings were so badly cracked and fissured that it was decided to remove the whole civil station to Luathaha  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles away. All the buildings have now been completed. The Bettiah Estate also has made good progress in reconstruction. The King Edward Memorial is nearly completed: the main building has been completed and was opened by the Hon'ble Mr. Tallents in February last. Other buildings of importance which have been completed are the bungalows of the 1st and 2nd Assistant Managers at Bettiah, and of the Circle Officers of Peepra and Turkaulia; the hostel attached to the Raj High English School, the Raj Girls' School and the Engineering office. The Circle Officer's bungalow at Motihari is nearing completion. The Raj office building at Bettiah is under construction and is nearly finished. The Bettiah Raj buildings on the Lake at Motihari have not been rebuilt, though temporary buildings erected after the earthquake have been leased out.

Of other important buildings damaged the Heycock Academy, the Bank of Bihar and the Mangal Seminary, the Motihari Mission have been rebuilt. The construction of the new Sadr Hospital at the Luathaha site has not however been taken up yet.

The District Board has completed the reconstruction of buildings including the Dak bungalow and District Engineer's residence with the help of the Government of India grant.

Private houses in the district have generally been reconstructed as required except in parts of Motihari. In this town the area between the main town road and the Lake is not fit for rebuilding and here only single-storied buildings of a temporary nature have been erected by the public.



In the rest of the town permanent reconstruction has in the case of the majority of the houses been finished.

*Damage to Culturable Land.*—As a result of the sand survey completed after the earthquake in May 1934, Rs. 10,66,153 was distributed in loans and Rs. 44,199 as free grants. The map given in Mr. Brett's report shows that the damage was slight generally in police-stations Adapur, Chouradano, Ghorasahan and Gobindganj, average in the area to the east of Segauli along the Sikrana, and in police-stations Motihari, Dhaka, Peepra, Madhubani and Kessariya : and two comparatively small areas, one west of Peepra police-station and one in Dhaka and Madhuban police-stations, suffered severe damage.

It is interesting to find that the deposits of sand are now in 1937 reported to have benefited land with a clay and loam-soil except where the sand deposit was deep. Land of a sandy nature has certainly been injuriously affected by deep deposits, but the area of such land is small.

*Damage to communications.*—The roads of Bettiah subdivision were very little affected as the damage was generally limited to the slump area. Throughout the Sadr subdivision bridges and culverts collapsed, and the roads were badly fissured. With the aid of the Government of India grant, all bridges and roads have been reconstructed and generally are now in better order than before. In Dhaka police-station however some roads, notably the Nawada-Sheohar, the Madhuban-Deokulia and the Rafepur-Tergrahi, are still more liable to dislocation by floods than before the earthquake.

*General levels of the country and liability to flood.*—After the earthquake it was feared that floods would cause immense damage owing to changes in the general level of the country and especially to waterways being choked. This anticipation was to some extent justified. For in the flood of 1934 though the flood readings at Chainpatia were 2' less than in the flood of 1915 the levels of Motihari were slightly higher than in 1915. Since the earthquake the rivers and water courses have to a large extent scoured their beds in the three successive years' floods.

In 1936 the flood at Chainpatia rose 6" above the 1915 level and in Motihari 9" above the level of that year. The earthquake therefore may be said to have left no permanent effect on the district in this respect.



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